OXFORD IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

A. D. GODLEY

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OXFORD IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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LYRA FRIVOLA

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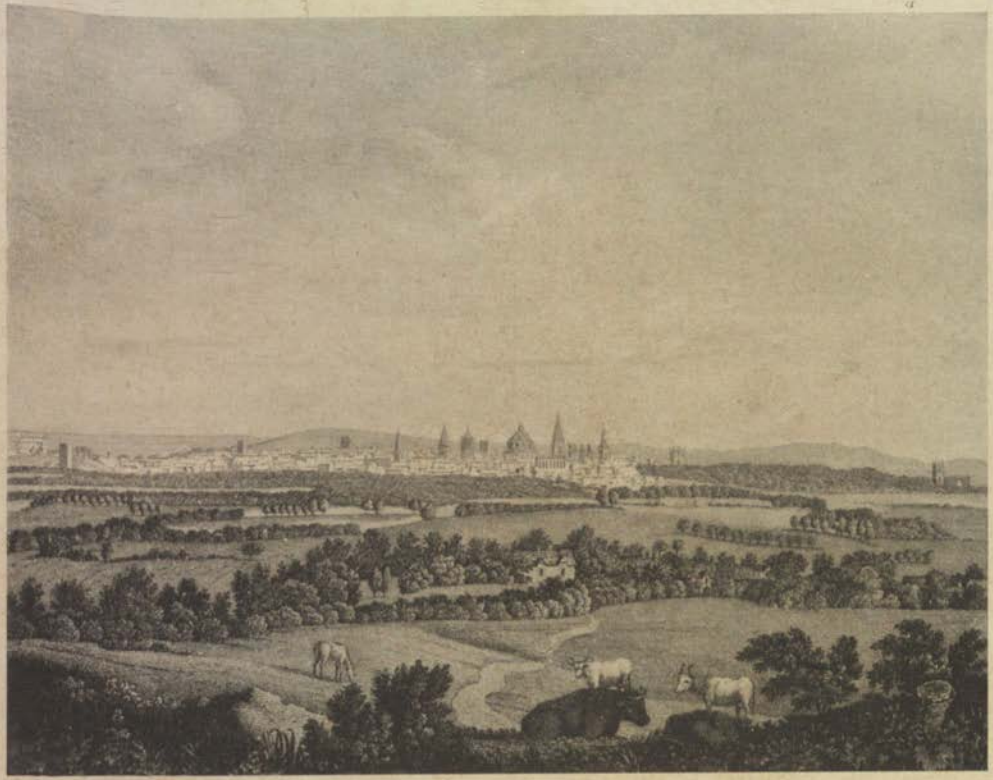

OXFORD FROM THE SOUTH-WEST

FROM AN ENGRAVING BY J. SKELTON

OXFORD IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

BY

A. D. GODLEY

AUTHOR OF "LYRA FRIVOLA" ETC.

58526

WITH SIXTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

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PREFACE

MY object in making this book has been to convey some idea of the conditions of academic life at Oxford in the eighteenth century. It seemed to me that the best way to do this was to make a "subject catalogue" of the various aspects of University life, and give each its separate chapter or so. This is not an entirely satisfactory method: but I do not know any that is better,—unless one could write a good historical novel. Certainly biographies, even of the most eminent Vice-Chancellors and Proctors, or a chronological narrative of events, would be even duller than the present volume. However, I have added a sort of "Who's Who" of Heads of Colleges, which may be convenient. During the eighteenth century Oxford was governed by "tyrannies" and close oligarchies, so that Heads of Houses made University history as they are not allowed to do by our modern régime of Boards and Committees.

The authorities for this period are very many,

and most of them are easier to find than to read when you have found them. I believe I have consulted all that were likely to be useful to me: that includes a great deal of printed matter, ancient and modern, and a little manuscript, such as the still unprinted part of Hearne's *Diary*. I am under a special obligation to the Provost of Queen's College, who has allowed me to see a MS. *Memoir* which throws some light on Oxford society: and to Mr. F. Madan and Mr. T. W. Jackson, for the help which they have given me in the Bodleian Library and the Hope Collection. Among modern volumes, those to which I am most indebted are the publications of the Oxford Historical Society: Messrs. Robinson's series of College *Histories*: and most of all, of course, Mr. Christopher Wordsworth's invaluable works of reference, *Scholæ Academicæ*, and *Social Life at the Universities in the Eighteenth Century*. The author of a volume like mine must necessarily be like "a very barren, dull Writer" mentioned by Hearne, who "rakes together what he can of other men's, and builds upon them": I can only say that I have tried not to be one who "oftentimes" (as the *Diary* goes on to say) "does them a great deal of injustice."

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OXFORD IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

I

INTRODUCTION

THE once-established division of history into centuries of the Christian era has, no doubt, its conveniences. But events and characteristics do not group themselves, unfortunately, on that principle: and one is apt to be led into dangerous excesses of doubtful generalisation, in so far as the character of a century is derived from the performance of one half of it; the remainder being quite unjustly praised for the virtues or blamed for the faults of that moiety of the age which is more picturesquely virtuous or vicious—which appeals, in short, more obviously to the imagination. Thus we generalise about the nineteenth century, which really did not begin until a third of it was over. But the eighteenth is more satisfying: with due allowance made for moments when it was rather

less "eighteenth" than usual,—especially towards its close,—between 1700 or so and 1800 or thereabouts, lies a chapter of English history, more or less homogeneous. If the affinities between its beginning and its end are not very striking, it is easier to see the resemblance between the two extremes and the middle—the central decades of the century which exhibit its general character in its most pronounced form: and things which are like the same, if they are not necessarily like each other, have at least a link. It is, therefore, possible to say that there was a real and not merely a chronological eighteenth century: and if this is true of England in general, it is probably also true of Oxford in particular.

One has to admit that so far as the University of Oxford is concerned, the history of the years between 1700 and 1800 is open to one large and general condemnation. It is dull. It is neither obviously attractive to write, nor (I fear) easy to read. Historians of seventeenth century Oxford have moving accidents to describe: the day is not a day of small things: the University is linked closely with the events of great and stirring times, years of passionate devotions and aspirations. If the century of Stuart rule was not exactly an age of academic progress, at least Universities advanced learning by the production of ponderous volumes. If the story of nineteenth century Oxford is ever written, it

will be a record of the attempts of reformers within and without to accommodate academic tradition to the changing thought of the age: and the steps of change will be marked by definite moments. Even now, near as we are to it, one sees the academic history of the last century falling quite naturally and easily into definite chapters, none of them without interest. But in the eighteenth, while change was no doubt at work largely, there is no very obvious special stamp to affix to the whole age; and while the Oxford of the beginning years differs widely from Oxford of the middle decades, and *toto cælo* from Oxford of the end, mainly because of influences that were at work in English society and affected the life of Universities only as parts of that society; yet it cannot be said that the modern reader, who naturally looks to be fed with the story of Causes and Movements and Tendencies, will find much to satisfy his appetite. There were no causes or movements (except one, which the University did its best to suppress) in eighteenth century Oxford: and the historian who tries to trace "developments" has to grope in a jungle of unimportant and inconsistent detail. Many things happened. But the movements were those of the individuals in a crowd which in the mass is either stationary or progressing very slowly. All the while, the forces were at work which were to shape the Oxford which we have known: but they were not working very obviously. It

was like the sea of the *Iliad* that surges this way and that

κύματι κωφῷ
ὀσσόμενος λιγέων ἀνέμων λαιψηρὰ κέλευθα,

looking for the violent coming of the loud winds,—which blow in due time with no uncertainty of direction.

The characteristics of Oxford at this time as at all times were those of its age, more or less: and it is useless to deny that there are many aspects of life in the early Hanoverian reigns which lend themselves to criticism. If the criticism has been sometimes a little overdone and lacking in due discrimination,—if, because some forms of progress are not conspicuous, it has occasionally failed to recognise any,—the eighteenth century remains open to the charge of being quite different from the nineteenth. The time, no doubt, was one of reaction from the stormy enthusiasms of the Civil Wars. It is easy, and not unjust, to say that the generation which lived under Anne and the first two Georges was too keenly conscious of the commotions and dangers which may follow from not accepting the world as you find it. Their own society was well content, therefore, to acquiesce in forms: not to associate abstract questionings of ideal Right and Wrong too closely with practical life: to respect formulæ as the embodiment of eternal laws, and to write down as an "Enthusiast" (a

term of mere abuse in the eighteenth century) the man whom formulæ failed to satisfy. England had had enough of zealots, and was content to acquiesce for a time in mere common sense: a relapse into which is even a desirable "rest cure" for nations occasionally. Of course, a narrow utilitarian view of conduct is not at all incompatible with the largest and most elevating generalisations: of which the eighteenth century is prolific, without being in the least hypocritical. There were not probably more Tartuffes and Pecksniffs in England then than at other and happier periods: simply this very remarkable age did genuinely believe that it is quite consistent to enunciate an edifying law of conduct, and to stigmatise those who take it too literally as dangers to society,—being the very millennium of a kind of illogical reason. What appeals to the taste of the time and forms its conduct is that which makes for immediate stability. No diplomatist was ever more devoted to a *status quo*.

Historians who deal with the academic records of this unlucky era hardly take their subject seriously. They dismiss it in a contemptuous phrase,—"Euthanasia of the Eighteenth Century" or the like,—a thing not to be reasoned of, but looked at and left as quickly as may be. They relate its only too frequent scandals with an ironic tolerance,—it has no character to lose, and nothing better can be expected. Satirists never had a more obvious cockshy. If this period has any useful

function, it is to serve partly as the "drunken Helot" of academic history—an awful warning to the Universities of our great commercial towns; and partly as a foil to the storm and stress of the seventeenth and the respectable activities of the later nineteenth century. One hardly hopes, at the beginning of the twentieth, to justify so discreditable an age at the bar of public opinion. We blame its ultra-conservatism and shallowness and sometimes cynical scepticism: we laugh at the stilted poses and phrases of the early Georgians, their formalism in dress and manner, their exaggeration of outward decorum; in literature their tendency to compose "without the eye on the object"; their reversion to classic models which have gone out of fashion or are (as we think) more intelligently used. Within and without Universities, they are the less excusable in our eyes for their various weaknesses, because, with social conditions rapidly approximating to our own, their habits of thought were so alien: whereas in the preceding age a society quite unlike ours in externals had intellectually and morally its points of contact with the Victorian era. The eighteenth century gave us all kinds of good gifts by which the nineteenth has profited—inventions, conquests, ideals of comfort, substantial prosperity, diffusion of knowledge, and, in short, most of the elements of complete civilisation. It patronised learning theoretically, and even practically. Bishoprics rewarded the heads

of presumably learned societies with a frequency not since observable. It was possible to collect £9000 to enable Kennicott to continue his Hebrew studies. Certainly society was neither Philistine nor unprogressive: but the progress was unintentional and almost unfelt. Morally and intellectually, the *ethos* of that part of the century which has given a character to the whole differed altogether from ours. It was not imaginative, nor was it humanitarian. And the Universities of an age like this, which, although in common fairness they should be considered in relation to the temper of their time, must still ultimately stand or fall in our judgment by their relation to our moral and intellectual ideals, could hardly expect to satisfy modern criticism. The failings of society in general may be palliated. The alleged moral delinquencies of bygone generations may be forgiven to a nation, or balanced by various kinds of achievement: but Universities which do not aspire above the common level of their time lose their reason of existence. The eighteenth century, it is said, if coarse and material, was sane and vigorous. Oxford during most of the century was quite in sympathy with the tone of the country in general (in which respect comparison might be drawn not altogether favourable to learned societies of a later time): but Universities cannot afford to be only sane and vigorous. Being of its age, Oxford had the defects of the period: and perhaps some-

times in an exaggerated form. It is undoubtedly true that the tendencies generally associated with the eighteenth century are precisely those which are apt to run to extremes in seats of learning. Formalism, inordinate reverence for "indolent tradition," dull devotion to a *status quo*—these are faults for which Oxford and Cambridge have often been reproached, and sometimes reproached with truth: grave and sober persons, naturally suspicious of popular caprice, surrounded by scenes which are the embodiment of venerable tradition, and governing themselves and their pupils by the very stability of their constitution, inevitably tend to develop a spirit of ultra-conservatism. Every College has something in it of the spirit of convention and tradition, even now: and in the reign of Anne and the first Georges, Universities must have found it especially easy and natural to live according to the disposition which is still a guiding or restraining force amid the Movements of the present day. This must be confessed. Yet the fact should be emphasised that it is only the middle decades of the century that were torpid and apathetic. Before them, academic authorities were vigorously doing their best—it was sadly needed—in the interest of decency and good order: and after them, if the University of Oxford was not in the strictest sense of the term progressive, it was at least eminently respectable, and even respected. The nineteenth

century cannot claim credit for everything. That no doubt active period owed to the eighteenth the machinery which facilitated its activities—systems of College government and University examination. Honour examinations were invented before 1800. If we are entitled to blame the slowness of progress and the continued toleration of negligence in teaching and farcical examinations, yet let the state of Oxford at the beginning of the century be compared with its state in 1800. It is a change from disorder to order in Colleges: in the University, the substitution (at last) of a modern and stimulating system of honour examinations for medieval exercises. The eighteenth century started its course heavily handicapped by the seventeenth. Some such reflections may help a little to guard against an excess of that moral and intellectual "superiority" which refuses to acknowledge the existence of good between the English and the French Revolution. If the strangeness of the middle part of the century is acknowledged and cannot really be defended, yet even then much that obviously offends our no doubt finer sense is after all a matter of changing national fashion, which has often very little to do with the eternal laws of right and wrong: and if we are shocked by some of the academic customs of our early Georgian ancestors, it is certain that they would have been at least equally shocked by a good many of ours. Moreover, it is not always right to deduce actual vicious-

ness from the conventionally gross phraseology of an age less decorous than our own.

English Universities are not often popular. When they have attained to a respectable age, any stick is good enough to beat them with: and a good many sticks undertake the task. Their directors—whether regarded, on the intellectual side, as pedants pursuing presumably useless knowledge, or on the social side as semi-monastic inhabitants of Colleges, mere homes for self-indulgent unpractical idlers—have seldom been loved by the public: from which, indeed, even as educators of youth they somehow stand apart. They are disliked for a supposed difference from ordinary men: they are liable to the imputation of priggishness: and are blamed most of all—paradoxically, if rightly—when they are found to be really no better than the generality: for then they are falling below their proper function. If we are to believe some contemporary authorities, it is the latter charge to which academic society of two hundred years ago was especially exposed. Some records of the period teem with notices of the vices of Dons: Hearne's *Diary*, Amherst's *Terræ Filius*, and the well-known aspersions of Gibbon (to take the three probably best known and most often quoted sources of the discredit attaching to contemporary Dons as a class) really seem at first sight to leave many academic dignitaries of the earlier eighteenth century without a rag of character.

But Dons are not always as black as they are painted. They have almost always suffered in the description. They have none to praise and very few to love them. They seldom—at least, at Oxford—eulogise each other: and are almost invariably censured, when thought worthy of mention at all, by undergraduates,—among whom it is still a mark of intellectual superiority to criticise your pastor and master. Moreover, the testimony of the three above-mentioned authorities is not wholly or always beyond suspicion. Gibbon's impressions were those of a boy of fifteen. Hearne was a diarist, Amherst a satirist: naturally with both censure predominates: no one writes satire, and few keep a diary, primarily for the purpose of eulogising their friends. It is still more to the point to remember the political partisanships of the time. Amherst was a Whig who liked his fling at Tory Dons,—who, in fact, rusticated him: while to Hearne all vices and all meannesses are the natural and inevitable attributes of what he calls a "Whigg": he is quite unable to write tolerantly of any one except an "Honest" man,—that is, one who is at least a Nonjuror, if not a Jacobite. In that age of violent party feud, personalities are singularly open to suspicion as materials for history. Even Hearne's and Amherst's Oxford—not to mention the worthier academic society of the later decades of the century—produced many good governors of

their respective foundations: virtuous men have lived before the Victorian era.

These attacks on individuals are not always a very serious matter. It is more difficult to defend eighteenth century ideals of academic education and erudition: no apologists have succeeded in disproving the charges of slackness and stagnation which are brought against the University in general. When all has been said, it remains undeniable that the University's output of erudition was not very large, and that exercises for degrees, if eventually reformed, yet remained for too long archaic in theory and in practice a farce: and if the country did not as yet criticise its Universities as we have learnt to do, yet the falling off of numbers indicates a want of confidence. In this respect Cambridge suffered more than Oxford—a thing not very easy to account for.

It is sometimes suggested that this torpor is the natural reaction, the lassitude which inevitably supervenes, after the storm and stress and turbulent activity of the Civil War period. This is a plausible and comfortable theory, and even contains some truth. Fellows of Colleges certainly no longer tasted the bitterness of expulsion and the fierce joys of restoration,—things of which there was living memory in the early century: and perhaps the too vivid sense of secure possession of material comforts may have so far engrossed their minds that they had no thoughts to spare for anything

else. But the "reaction" theory will not account for everything: nor as a matter of fact is it quite borne out by history. In Oxford at least, that home of lost causes, there was no reaction from political activity.

Party feeling ran high, even for that age of partisanship: the storm of politics raged in the academic teapot with quite as much violence as in the world outside. Changed circumstances no doubt prevented zeal from being translated into action: but the seventeenth century spirit was still alive: Fellows of Colleges were not far removed in sentiment from their predecessors who had drilled in Merton Fields or Broken Heys for King Charles, or even ridden with Rupert to beat up the Parliamentary outposts among the hills and woods of the Buckinghamshire border. Nor again (although it is true that some of the faults of Universities have a special kinship with the alleged failings of the eighteenth century) can the inactivity of Oxford be accounted for as a mere reflection of the temper of the times. If this were so we should expect to find these same accusations of educational inefficiency directed against Cambridge as well as Oxford: and this is precisely what we do not find. Cambridge had her shortcomings, as judged by a nineteenth century standard. Some of her professorships were sinecures, and some of her exercises for degrees were inadequate tests of the intellect. But on the whole it must be confessed that Oxford, educationally

speaking, falls short of the not very exalted level attained by the sister University: Cambridge men may claim that in comparison with ourselves they were sober and industrious learners and teachers—essaying perhaps a less varied and less ambitious programme, but doing what they did with relative diligence.

It is probably in the circumstances of this difference between the two Universities that we should look for the real reason of Oxonian inactivity, so far as education is concerned, during the great part of the century under discussion. Cambridge suffered far less from the Civil Wars than did Oxford: her house in 1700 or so needed far less setting in order. But also—and here perhaps the Civil War may be a *vera causa*—the fact is that Oxford and Cambridge have during the past two hundred years regarded the outside world from a very different standpoint. The elder sister has never stood apart from the great events of English history. Parliaments and Courts have sat in Oxford: she has even been a kind of second capital of England: and if the town and gown rows of the Victorian era (extinct in this more peaceful age) were not actually the beginnings of civil war, as in the days of which the poetical chronicler writes that

> "When Oxford draws knife
> England's soon at strife,"

still her interests have never been strictly local. She has even been too anxious to emphasise her

membership in the whole body politic, to keep in touch with the great world, to treat public opinion occasionally as a gallery to be played to, more often as a foe to be fought, but in any case not as merely negligible and outside the sphere of academic interests. Cambridge in days of external storm and stress has been more content to isolate herself from the world: her sages, like him of the Republic, have preferred generally to shelter themselves under a wall until evil days should be overpast rather than to face the arena of politics: in rowing language they have "kept their eyes in the boat": the movements initiated at Oxford have been in the end national rather than strictly academic. The keenest Oxonian activity has been directed into external rather than Oxonian channels. It is indeed only in comparatively recent days that the waters of the Isis have been seriously troubled by strictly educational controversies: and then it was the Cam that set the example. The two principles, one of which does and the other does not look beyond the bounds of the University,—the two systems, which respectively treat the undergraduate primarily as a recipient of the liberal arts and as a potential servant of the State,—are both very good in their different ways: but they may both lead to injurious extremes: and if Oxford, the "Jacobite capital" of the kingdom, was only playing her natural part in allowing her attention to be deeply engrossed by the Whig-versus-Tory partisanships of the earlier

eighteenth century, her studies could not but suffer. Political acerbity very often goes hand in hand with intellectual narrowness and dulness. "Those that are most noisy among you upon the Topicks of Church and State," says a Whig to a Tory Master of Arts in an imaginary *Oxford Dialogue* of 1705, "are the least learned; and indeed this engrosses their time so much, that neither Discipline nor Learning nor even the Prayers in your Chapels, however loud their cry for the Church is, are regarded by them." The Civil War and the Restoration had done their work only too well in Oxford in bringing her still more closely into touch with politics. There was a general wish, say the historians of New College, to return to the older and better ways; but the old simplicity of life was gone. Nor should it be forgotten that in the earlier part of this "century of stagnation," Colleges had many internal questions to distract their attention. English society was going through a period of transformation: and Colleges had to reconstitute themselves to suit the changing order of things. Hence Hearne writes in 1726 that all Colleges are now so much engaged in "law businesses and quarrels, that good letters miserably decay every day." At the last ordination, fifteen candidates were "deny'd orders for Insufficiency." (This, says the malicious diarist, is the more to be noted "because our Bishops and those employed by them are themselves generally illiterate men.")

It may then be stated broadly—and I hope the statement will be confirmed by later pages—that the period of least academical efficiency coincides with the reigns of the first two Georges. This, at least, is the dark age for most Colleges; and it was during these years that Oxford was passing through a stage of bitter discontent and opposition. Good Liberals may draw the inference that we have here one more proof of the invariable alliance between Tory principles and intellectual obscurantism. Without going so far as that, one may probably conclude that the proper business of College and University was ill done because Dons thought too much about politics.

Similarly, as political bitterness begins to disappear, we find Colleges, on the whole, beginning to pay more attention to the claims of learning and education. As the eighteenth century advanced it became more and more, in the words of its historian, the age of the diffusion of knowledge: sooner or later this was bound to affect the studies of Oxford: meantime, the growing civilisation of the country in general, with improving facilities of communication, was daily bringing the University more and more into touch not only with politics, but with all aspects of English life, introducing Oxford to larger and wider interests, more compatible with reasonable academic ideals than the old Whig and Tory animosities had been.

But as one looks at different periods in the

academic life of the century, how difficult it is to speak broadly of improvement and decadence,—to use phrases of general application to all the complex existence of the University! Like the Thames at Oxford, progress has many channels: here the current is rapid, there it is sluggish; now it is a broad and deep river, there a narrow and half-unknown backwater. According to the point on which they fix their eyes, critics will still differ as to whether good or evil predominates at a particular moment; and if they generalise, as they will, their generalisations are sure to be contradictory. It is largely a matter of temperament. To one reader, the earliest years of the eighteenth century are years of turbulence, but much laudable effort. To another, they are a time of idle squabbles; and the long peace from 1720 (when, according to some, Oxford was merely torpid) "restored England and restored Oxford"—to the state of perfection described in Mr. Gibbon's Autobiography. To one, it is sufficient that Oxford should have produced the few who were really eminent in their respective branches of learning: another will point to the damning fact that these shining lights only emphasise the surrounding darkness. Oxford has so many aspects, and so varied an output, that these discrepancies will still appear. There is failure here, there is success there. By which shall she be judged? Perhaps Colleges cannot be praised for the after-performance of their alumni, and

the alleged inefficiency of Magdalen teaching cannot be balanced by the fact that the College was privileged to entertain for a while the authors of the *Decline and Fall* and the "Ode to Evening." Yet it is fair to point out that a period of incapable teaching and ridiculous examinations may produce Butlers or Wesleys, a Horne, a Routh, — both Magdalen men,—or a Blackstone ; and the Oxford of his day can be described by Berkeley as an ideal retreat for learning and piety. Are we to condemn one age because it falls short of doing the special work approved by another? We must first settle what is the End of Universities. "These are the riddles nobody can solve" — or rather, of which every one has a different solution.

II

LOCAL HABITATION

THE hand of the nineteenth century has been heavy on Oxford; and, to all appearance, the twentieth will be no kinder. Speculative builders have set the ancient city in an unattractive frame of brick. Villadom, more or less elegant, fringes her approaches from northern Wolvercote to southern Iffley. Municipal and private enterprise decorates the High Street and the Cornmarket and St. Aldates' with buildings which reconcile ornateness with efficiency by superimposing a blend of half a dozen incongruous styles on the practical necessity of a shopfront. Colleges should know better, and sometimes do. Their own taste and public criticism has done much in recent years to save them; but even they have suffered many things at the hands of too ambitious architects.

Looking down over the Thames Valley from some height of the "warm green-muffled Cumnor hills" — themselves, alas that such a fate should have befallen the classic solitudes haunted by echoes and memories of Thyrsis and the Scholar Gipsy! now too often turned into eligible building

lots—looking from these erstwhile pleasant places one sees the smallness of old Oxford, a tiny oasis of grey in a wilderness of red brick: and one realises also what must have been the beauty of that group of spires and towers and ancient walls when nothing surrounded it but green fields, intersected by the network of waterways that bound the town to east and west. We have enlarged our borders indeed, at the expense of picturesqueness, in the last thirty years. But the general plan of the ἄστυ, the true city, has not been substantially changed in the last three centuries; the ravages of improvement have not straightened the High nor widened the Turl, —except in a few unimportant respects the plan of streets and lanes remains intact; and most of our accretions are of so recent date that living memory can recall a town which in outline was only substantially different from Hyde's map of 1733—and even the Oxford of 1675 as drawn in Loggan's—in respect of the large additions and alterations made between the line of St. Giles' and the river. Most of the familiar features are there already in the old maps,—even to the germ of a transpontine suburb on the way to Iffley and Cowley.

It is harder to visualise the detail of streets as they existed in the early part of the eighteenth century. To form any picture of that, one must go now to the architecture of such small country towns as lie aside from the lines of modern civilisation and have therefore preserved their Tudor or

Jacobean architectural minutiæ with little substantial alteration: old Cotswold towns, such as Burford or Campden, are the best object-lesson—to go no farther than the regions accessible from Oxford. Here alone the general prevailing type is that of the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries—high-pitched roofs, gabled fronts, timbered walls, mullioned windows, projecting upper stories—all, in short, that both the eighteenth century and we ourselves have destroyed, our forefathers with a cheerful conviction of rectitude, we with at least a blush. Few ages admire the work of their immediate predecessors in architecture. Perhaps we may boast ourselves to be more catholic in our appreciations: apparently we can seldom build, but—except when the appeal to utility is too strong—we can refrain from destroying: so far as actual demolition goes, our record, considering the increase of temptation, may be considered good. Antiquity appeals to us as it did not to the Perpendicular builders who substituted their work for much of Decorated and Early English, or to the Classical revivalists who condemned Norman, Early English, Decorated, Perpendicular, and Elizabethan alike as "Gothic and barbarous." They destroyed much of it; but they were justified to a certain extent by their sincere conviction that they were right and the "Gothic" builders wrong. Addison could only admire the great Cathedral of Siena with reservation, as a good example of a kind naturally bad.

When this is all that the educated taste of that age can say of Italian Gothic—which of course partakes much more of the classical than does the style of great French or English churches—one cannot well wonder that the learned Zachary Uffenbach, who visited Oxford in 1710, dismisses the Tower and Cloisters of Magdalen in a contemptuous phrase as "old and bad."

"Oxford" (so writes in 1773 the Rev. Sir J. Peshall, editing Anthony Wood) "is better seen than described. The magnificent Colleges, and other most noble Edifices, standing in, and giving an Air of Grandeur to the Streets: the many delightful Walks: elegant Gardens: rich Chapels: grand Libraries: the Beauty of the Meadows and Rivers, that on every Side delight the Eye: the Sweetness of the Air: the Learning, and frequent public Display of it, and the Politeness of the Place: the Harmony and Order of Discipline: not to mention the great Number of Strangers that continually visit us, and express their Satisfaction, conspire to render it the Delight and Ornament of the Kingdom, not to say of the World." Among the multitude of detractors, this whole-hearted enthusiasm (even for the Oxford climate, which has been praised by few) is very gratifying. But the learned Uffenbach is not easily moved to these raptures. He is not among those who "express their satisfaction." He is nearly always cold, and for the most part contemptuous. What strikes

him on his first arrival at Oxford from Cambridge is that it is merely an open town, like a great village (*ein grosses Dorf*). And of course the town had long passed beyond the limit of its medieval fortifications. Walls were probably little more in evidence than they are at present; but gateways marked the southern, eastern, and northern approaches. Uffenbach entered by the famous gate called Bocardo, situated close to St. Michael's Church at the end of North Gate Street —the Cornmarket as we call it now: the gateway takes its name from the prison which formed part of the same building,—a name of unknown origin. "This prison," says Mr. Boase, "may have been so named, sarcastically, from the form of syllogism called Bocardo, out of which the reasoner could not 'bring himself back into his first figure' without the use of special processes:" but Wood, or his editor, Peshall, has a different explanation. "We find *Brocardia* from our Lawyers to signify . . . a contentious Matter full of significations and opinions. Now whether such Matters were acted here, and the Place so called by a Metonymy, I know not; but notwithstanding (to speak Theologically) in the Times of the Old Testament the Gates of the City were used as seats of Judgment, Administration of Justice, and Decision of controversy." *Origo in obscuro.* But that there was a prison over the Gate, the city gaol, in fact, there is no doubt: John and Charles Wesley visited the

NORTH GATE

FROM AN ENGRAVING BY J. SKELTON AFTER THE DRAWING BY J. B. MALCHAIR

prisoners: these "Bocardo birds," as they were called, used to beg from passers-by, letting down a hat out of their window. Here was "the *Bishop's Hole*, a most horrible dungeon." Gateway and prison were pulled down in 1771, when the East Gate was also destroyed. The picture in Skelton represents this last as a structure evidently of no great antiquity, to judge from the style of architecture, marking the limit of the town just west of the junction of Longwall and High Street. South Gate had been in Fish Street—now St. Aldates'—just below Christ Church; but had been demolished before the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Another ingress was provided by "Littlegate," only a few hundred yards to the west of South Gate, originally communicating with a ford or watering-place in the river. This existed through the eighteenth century, though very much dilapidated. But travellers from the west approached Oxford by the "Botley Causeway," passing the site and remains of Osney and Rewley Abbey—part of the buildings of the latter was still visible in the last quarter of the eighteenth century—and entering the town by Bocardo by way of Hythe Bridge Street and what is now George Street, immediately north of the ground called "Broken Heys." The Causeway is apparently indicated in Agas' map. By 1771 the historian can say that the "West Entrance, for above a Mile, over seven raised modern elegant Bridges of white Stone, is

very beautiful." We have changed all that, so far as beauty is concerned. But there are still seven bridges.

These various approaches converged then as now on the historic crossroads of Carfax, the Quatervois or Quadrivium of many memories: the rallying-place for the town in the old days of battle, as on that day of S. Scholastica in February 1353, when certain angry citizens "out of propensed malice, seeking all occasion of conflict with the scholars . . . caused the Town Bell at St. Martin's to be rung, that the commonalty might be summoned together: whereon followed much riot and blood-shed." Carfax had also its traditions of civic government. Here was "Pennyless Bench," where "the Mayor and his Brethren meet occasionally on public affairs; and if Tradition and History inform us right, this was the Seat frequently of the Muses: and that many Wits were Benchers here." In the eighteenth century it was a shelter, built by the City at the east end of Carfax Church, to protect market women from rain. But in 1747 it was removed: having apparently become a resort of disorderly people. Close by, in the centre of the converging roads, stood the celebrated Carfax conduit, which for a hundred and fifty years supplied Oxford with water from the hill above North Hinksey. It was erected by Otho Nicholson in the seventeenth, and removed (as a present to the Harcourt family) towards the end of the eighteenth century: and is

now a familiar object to picnickers in Nuneham Park.

Anthony Wood preserves the memory of a great many ancient Halls in various parts of the town—the great majority of which had by 1700 been displaced by College buildings, or renounced their academic connexion and passed into the hands of citizen owners or tenants. Ayliffe reckons seven as belonging to the University. This class of buildings, so charactistic of old Oxford and so closely interwoven with early University history, has left us a few survivals—for the most part *perierunt etiam ruinæ*. But Oxford of the reign of Anne knew a good many of them still—such as the still surviving Black Hall in St. Giles' and Kettle Hall in Broad Street; or Greek Hall, the legendary habitation of Greek philosophers from Grekelade (Cricklade); or Antiquity Hall, in Hythe Bridge Street, the favourite hostelry of that honest Tory Hearne.

These have perished, and their place knows them no more. Many of the old-fashioned houses of the seventeenth century streets gave place to the solid domestic architecture of the early Georgians. There was a good deal of simple clearance; houses stood in many places since opened out, — opposite Magdalen, for instance, and in Cat Street, and on the site of the Martyrs' Memorial—the latter group indeed survived the century, as it is shown in a drawing of 1804.

The picture of the High in 1765, preserved by Skelton, shows already much of the foursquare style of the period. It was an era of building. Uffenbach, who hated Gothic, would have been much better pleased with Oxford had he visited it thirty years later; the Clarendon Building was erected in 1713 by Vanbrugh, and the Radcliffe Camera in 1737 by Gibbs. Colleges in especial were full of plans for their regeneration according to the received ideas of "elegance": there was "daily building" in them, Uffenbach says. Fifty years later a writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* blames the inhabitants of Oxford for seeming "to be more fond of multiplying useless masses of stone than of adorning the face of nature."

> "See, from each Ruin some new Pile doth rise,
> And Modern Building now the Old outvies"

—so sings a poet in 1738. All Souls', encouraged by Codrington's donation of £10,000 ("which might be better employed than on a palace for these idle Socii, as they mostly are," Uffenbach writes in his peevish way), built the famous library which the enthusiastic historian of the College calls the finest building of the Italian style. It was completed in 1756; and the whole of the College was Italianised except the front on the High Street. This too would have been similarly dealt with, had not the architect himself, with a virtue not always found in architects, strongly advised the governing body to preserve "antient durable Public Buildings that are

strong and usefull" (part of All Souls' had been, says Hearne, designed as if to last for ever), "instead of erecting new, fantasticall, perishable trash." *O si sic omnes!* Queen's, Gothic and barbarous till 1710, —Queen's Hall survived for many years, and is preserved in Gough, with its fine Early English doorway and Decorated window,—was then entirely rebuilt in the Palladian manner—"a truly royal structure" (*recht königliches Gebaüde*), Uffenbach calls it, satisfied for once: and Tickell, himself a Queen's man, is equally enthusiastic about "the pile now worthy great Philippa's name!" Uffenbach is much pleased also with the Fellows' Buildings of Corpus Christi, which belong to about the same period. Later canons of taste may find additional justification in the fact that Queen's, the only Oxford College which has been completely Palladianised, is also the only one which has seriously suffered by fire in the last hundred and fifty years: there was a great fire in 1778, which burnt out the west wing abutting on the High Street: and another in 1886—originating in the Bursary, where, it was alleged by wits of the period, the Bursar had been cooking the accounts. The Peckwater quadrangle of Christ Church assumed its present form about 1706. Magdalen offers perhaps the most typical instance of the taste and the activity of the eighteenth century: a plan was proposed and in part executed whereby the "old and bad" cloisters were to be demolished, and a large new

quadrangle constructed in the Classical style: the New Buildings, begun in 1733, and standing where Loggan puts a road bordered by cottages, represent the completed part of this work. Nothing more was erected, either from the growing sense that there was something to be said for "Gothic" after all, or, more probably, from lack of funds. Similarly, Worcester was to have been entirely Classical in style; but repentance or impecuniosity saved the ancient buildings of Gloucester Hall. Other Colleges, such as Merton and New College, escaped the whips of the early Georgian era only to smart from the scorpions of the Victorian. Balliol has suffered severely from both periods. Of the other foundations, Trinity (which had been largely rebuilt at the close of the seventeenth century), Oriel, St. John's, and Wadham have most successfully escaped the improvements of the last two hundred years. On the whole one may say that the eighteenth century reconstructors of Colleges destroyed much work that was beautiful, and erected some that is ugly: but, saved as they were from themselves by lack of necessary funds, the result of their work was to produce variety of styles: and variety is the characteristic charm of much English architecture. Their most dangerous period lasted for fifty years or so, when the passion for Italianisation, which produced much good work, was carried to excess. Towards the end of the century a reaction gradually set in: the Palladian

model was no longer the only one possible for a man of taste; and Peshall can go so far as to call the old buildings of Magdalen "superb." Yet even now much that we call picturesque was simply unsightly. The writer of *A Tour in the Midlands* (1774) speaks of private houses "of timber plastered over, their upper stories projecting forward, yet not so ugly as in other towns I have seen."

Oxford is still to a certain extent a "garden city," a town of many collegiate and domestic garden nooks, even in the heart of its streets and lanes: so that even in these days of modern improvement such a view as may be had from the roof of the Radcliffe or Magdalen Tower shows a most picturesque intermingling of grey and green. At the beginning of the period which we are describing, Uffenbach visited the Physic Garden, with its "very ugly but very industrious" custodian Jacob Bobart: whereof a Christ Church poet sings:

> "Hortus ad Auroram Phœbeis fertilis herbis
> Stat, Bobartanæ cura laborque manus."

The laudatory Tickell celebrates trees and shrubs cut into fantastic shapes as the principal beauty of the Garden:

> "How sweet the landskip! where in living trees,
> Here frowns a vegetable Hercules!
> There fam'd Achilles learns to live again
> And looks yet angry in the mimic scene:
> Here artful birds, which blooming arbours show,
> Seem to fly higher while they upward grow!"

Magdalen Walks, "pleasant though not regular,"

as he calls them (that is, not laid out in formal style, as contemporary art represents most College gardens), were then as now a popular resort: and became more popular than ever when the more famous "Merton Walks" (a terrace 74 yards long, made in Merton on the old town wall) were closed to the general public, because of their dangerous fascination for undergraduates and "Toasts." But Uffenbach calls this much-praised resort "low dark walks, which, as they have no proper air, are not pleasant." The same observer visited "Paradise Garden," in St. Ebbe's between the Castle and Folly Bridge: a common resort of Fellows who came there to drink. Paradise Square preserves the name and site. The Parks, so important a part of modern Oxford, assumed something of their present character about the middle of the century. "I should speak," says the always enthusiastic Peshall, "of a neat Terras Walk made round Part of a large Field, called the Park, adjoining to the North-East End of the City, extending about a Mile, which serves for a pleasant and wholesome Walk: whilst it opens to the Country, adorned with Hills, noble Seats, Spires of Churches, etc., on looking back on the City, there are viewed rich Domes, Turrets, Spires, Towers, etc., of the Colleges, Churches, etc., peeping over the Groves:

"Built nobly, pure the Air, and light the Soil,
ATHENS . . .
. . . in her sweet Recess,
City or Suburban, studious Walks and Shades."

The eighteenth century gave Christ Church its Broad Walk,—originally called, as we are told, "White Walk": whence "Wide" and eventually "Broad." St. Giles', still one of the most picturesque streets in Oxford, is, according to Peshall, a *Rus in Urbe*, planted with trees, and with Parterres of green before the houses. (Close by, between St. Giles' and Walton Street, were the ruins of Henry II.'s palace of Beaumont, the destruction of which is lamented by Skelton or his editor: part of its remains is said to have been incorporated into a large building—"Woodroffe's Folly"—erected by Dr. Benjamin Woodroffe at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and intended by him to be a College for the education of boys belonging to the Greek Church. Much of the ground covered by Beaumont Street, now a resort of the medical profession, had been a cemetery.) Trees in the streets, and even in College quadrangles, were a more familiar sight than they are at present: in 1727 "they cut down," Hearne writes, "the fine pleasant garden in Brasenose College quadrangle," which was "a delightfull and pleasant Shade in Summer Time." This was done "purely to turn it into a grass plot, and to erect some silly statue there." There was a planted enclosure before the Broad Street front of Balliol during part at least of the century, as now before St. John's: here the Fellows of Balliol used to sit and wait for the arrival of the mail coach,—having, as one gathers from the con-

temporary history of Balliol, very little else to do. The trees have gone, and Fellows of Colleges have no time to be mere *flâneurs* nowadays: and the Oxford which they inhabit is undoubtedly less picturesque: for whatever of beauty has been added by the nineteenth century is balanced by the ugly if necessary accretions of modern development and progress. On a general comparison of gain and loss,—setting the much good work done by the Italianisers of the eighteenth century and their striving after what should be at least substantial, neat, and orderly, against their demolition of much picturesque antiquity, — it is not rash to conclude that even according to our canons of taste the University town had never been more beautiful than she was about 1800. Much old work had perished: but enough remained to gain by the charm of contrast.

As the general plan of streets, so approaches to Oxford change but little. Travellers to Eynsham and the west, crossing the Botley Causeway aforementioned, followed a road which passed over—not as at present to the south of—Wytham hill: and the modern road which ascends Cumnor hill on the way to Fyfield was not apparently known to the early eighteenth century. The main London road crossed the top of Shotover, instead of skirting it to the north. By this route, as the century proceeded, the Worcester Fly and other "Flying Machines" of the period—by 1760

there was a good deal of competition—accomplished the journey from Oxford to London in a day, with such speed and safety as the state of the road, and the gentlemen thereof, permitted. Bursars of Colleges, journeying with rent in their ample pockets, had much need of the pistols and blunderbusses which still adorn more than one common room, — picturesque memorials of an age when Colleges could still protect themselves against robbery. One reads of travellers being robbed quite close to the town—no farther off than "the galloping ground above Botley,"—on Wytham hill, presumably. Public opinion was curiously lenient in its comments on Dick Turpin and his fraternity: *per contra*, it hanged them when caught. Even undergraduates suffered. Dr. Routh (born in 1756, died in 1855) had seen the thing. "What, Sir, do you tell me, Sir, that you never heard of Gownsman's Gallows? Why, I tell you, Sir, that I have seen two undergraduates hanged on Gownsman's gallows in Holywell—hanged, Sir, for highway robbery!" The gallows stood at or near the east end of Holywell Street.

III

TEACHING

EDUCATION, a term susceptible of a large variety of interpretations, has always been held to be one of the chief reasons of a University's existence; and eighteenth century Oxford is blamed, —not indeed so much for its lack of such instruction as our more enlightened age considers adequate, whether as a mental discipline or a direct preparation for a business career,—but for failing to comply even with the—to our minds—not very exacting demands of its own contemporaries. And it is quite possible that we may find that this indictment is, broadly speaking, a true one; but at the same time, as in all matters concerning a period so different in motive and method from our own, so here it is necessary to put up "danger boards," to save hasty generalisers from plunging into perilous excesses of virtuous condemnation. Too many critics are ready to put the worst construction on all the acts of the eighteenth century simply because it was not the seventeenth or the nineteenth. The time has been given a bad name, and is consequently

hanged. One is occasionally reminded of the mental attitude of the boy who threw a stone at a toad with the expressed intention of "larning it to be a toad." This is hardly the method proper to the candid historian.

Perhaps we are too recent and therefore too ardent converts to a policy of ubiquitous supervision and continual instruction (which may or may not be beneficial: learning is not always advanced when the Don turns pedagogue) to be able to judge fairly of our predecessors. But even contemporaneous condemnations of educational systems are not necessarily and finally damning. In England, at least, the instruction of youth is every one's butt: and while the medical profession has been congratulated on the fact that its successes walk abroad, but the earth conceals its failures,—places of education enjoy no such advertisement. They are known by their failures. In regard of their relation to their alumni, Cicero's word is only too true, "cui placet obliviscitur, cui dolet meminit": a good education is forgotten, a bad one rankles. Were the world just, schools and Universities would get credit for the successes of their pupils in after-life, as they are now blamed for their subsequent failures. But men are supposed to fail in consequence, and to succeed in spite of education. It has then to be remembered that even improved educational manners and customs have in the last thirty years heard but little of praise and much of

condemnation. The public will still be cavilling. Nevertheless it must be allowed that the modern satirist has changed his object; charges of sloth are no longer his permanent stock-in-trade; Universities are blamed less for idleness than for misplaced and perverse activity. It is not that the Fellow of these days does not teach: the gravamen is that he teaches the wrong things, and wears himself out for frivolous ends, such as compulsory examinations in Greek.

The non-academic world, not interesting itself in the rather obscure relation between Colleges and the University, seldom takes the trouble to define its ideas as to different kinds of academic education. It rests for the most part content with a vague and incurious belief that University teaching is represented by the Professoriate; and if Professors do not teach, then there can be no University teaching, and therefore obviously no teaching in the University. This view ignores the College tutor: and although it is true that Colleges in general, as distinct from the University, have had their moments of educational inefficiency, it is by no means safe to assume that at any period within the last two centuries Oxford has been untaught because her Professors were silent or unheard. It is within the experience of our own enlightened age, purified by two Commissions and the threat of a third, that Professors have been as voices crying in the wilderness—testifying to empty

benches or, more frequently, to audiences practically non-academic,—in any case, really non-existent so far as undergraduates are concerned: yet the education of youth has somehow been carried on. If the early Georgian Professor was compelled to lecture by no Visitatorial Board, and hardly even by any public opinion, we are not on the evidence before us entitled to conclude as to general and all-pervading educational inactivity. If there were not Professors, there may at least have been College tutors.

Let it, moreover, be granted that both the teachers and the learners of the eighteenth century were fewer than they should have been: yet still that there were a few (for that there was an active minority will hardly be disputed): it is within the province of an *advocatus diaboli* to plead that these few may claim credit for a disinterested zeal which we are not entitled to boast. The study of Greek could seldom be recommended to young men as the highroad to situations of emolument. It must have been pursued as an end in itself; and no doubt it would be a mere libel to allege that many moderns have not so pursued it; still, since honour examinations and open competition for Fellowships have cleared the way for ambitious merit, our own happier age must lie under the suspicion of mixing its motives: pure enthusiasm for the higher scholarship may be tinged with the mere carnal desire to succeed. The eighteenth century had but little adventitious stimulus to learning. It was a period

of conventions: Oxford gave her degrees really for residence, on the basis of the plausible and pleasing convention that Universities being places of study are inhabited by students, and that residence implied the habit of serious study. No doubt this attractive theory was at variance with the obvious facts of life; still those who entertained it may at least have the credit of maintaining a theory which is nothing if not respectable: and the few who did actually try to verify it must be the more laudable for the lack of incentive. In the absence of honour examinations and even of pass examinations other than merely farcical, they did nevertheless teach and learn.

It is true that opinions differ as to the stimulating effect of examinations. Eminent authorities have held that even the average man is more likely to learn when he is least harassed by any form of compulsory test: compulsion in any form (as they say) actually stunts the learner's zeal and corrupts his virtue: take away the extraneous pressure, and you are the more likely to allow free play to the generous instincts of the average undergraduate, who, as Adam Smith maintains, will always go eagerly to any teacher provided the teaching be good. Yet Adam Smith had been at Balliol, in the days when that great College had not yet begun to be a centre of sweetness and light. Is the categorical imperative of the Moral Law a sufficient inducement to study? If it was so in the later

years of the eighteenth century, then it is to be feared that we are worse than our forefathers. In a similar spirit, an even more respectable authority, the Rev. Mark Pattison, declares his conviction that compulsory examinations produce "paralysis of intellectual action." They even encourage a man to be no more than "the foppish exquisite of the drawing-room or the barbarised athlete of the arena." One may question the conclusions of these eminent men. There were "loungers" and idlers among undergraduates before the institution of real examinations, honour or pass; and in all probability this number would have been diminished by the presence of some obvious and intelligible incentive to reading.

The influence of examinations can hardly be overrated by any one who would estimate justly the relative criminality of *average* tutors and pupils in the nineteenth and in the preceding century. It is from our honour schools (which, let it be observed, we owe to the years immediately preceding 1800, the year of the passing of the New Examination Statute) that Oxford has derived most of her modern activity in the field of learning as well as education. They have been the battleground of intercollegiate competition—a thing which has been regretted by superior persons, but nevertheless is the true parent of much research as of much "pot-hunting": and out of them—or out of the closer connexion in which honour examinations have

linked the Universities with the external public—has grown that incessant and no doubt salutary vigilance with which the public has watched the ways of Oxford and Cambridge (especially Oxford) during the past half-century. That fierce light of public opinion never beat upon eighteenth century Oxford.

Men of learning are too often reluctant to communicate their erudition to the world in the form of oral teaching; nor is this to be attributed in most cases to mere indolence. The hearing of lectures has been condemned by students as an interruption to reading: their delivery is more truly an interruption to research. To address an audience severely limited by the nature of the subject may be in itself depressing: and if you are engaged upon a *magnum opus*, to give a foretaste and as it were a private view of its contents may be even imprudent. Nor has it been maintained always, everywhere, and by all that a Professor's first duty is teaching: eminent authority is prepared to condone his silence. Mark Pattison, asserting that "the reputation of Berlin rests not upon any education given to its 2000 students, but upon the scientific industry of its Professors," quotes the learned and industrious Professor Ritschl to the effect that "a professor's life would be a very pleasant one if it were not for the lecturing": and concludes that "the professor of a modern University ought to regard himself as primarily a learner, and a teacher only secondarily."

Could the Oxford Professors of our rude forefathers' days show a literary output of permanent value, abstention from mere lecturing might be pardoned to them; but it appears only too probable that the learned men must look elsewhere for their defence.

However it be, Mr. Wordsworth's statement that shortly before the year 1800, not more than one in three of the Oxford Professors gave lectures, would perhaps be even too optimistic in reference to the Oxford of a century earlier. There appears to be every reason to believe that the Professoriate, in general, with very few exceptions, had ceased to lecture long before 1700. According to Sir W. Hamilton (who, it should be remembered, writes with a strong and possibly justifiable animus against the tutorial system of his own day), professorial teaching had been deliberately extinguished by tutorial jealousy; the Professors' courses of lectures were put down by the Heads of Colleges from mere motives of self-interest, in order to give the monopoly of instruction to the Fellow-tutor. Pattison's account of the matter is perhaps the more probable. He traces the silence of Professors to the want of audiences fitted to hear them. During the Stuart reigns and the Civil Wars the place of ideas had been taken by "the narrow interests of ephemeral party." "The best education which the University could give at that date did not go beyond that which is now suggested to the passmen. It did not go beyond

the languages,—or rather the Latin language, for Greek was rare,—the technical part of logic, the rudiments of geometry." Education had adapted itself to the capacities of its recipients. This lowering of the intellectual level was effected by sovereign authority, which used its power over both Church and Universities for political ends. It was the Government, and not the University itself, which had closed the gates of Oxford to Nonconformists, crushing academic freedom; and "the twenty-three years of Leicester's Chancellorship (1565–1588) left Oxford pretty much what it remained up to the nineteenth century, without independence, without the dignity of knowledge, without intellectual ambition, the mere tool of a political party." So if "long before the Laudian Statutes of 1636 the Professors had ceased to have a class because there were no longer any students sufficiently advanced to attend them," it was the spacious times of great Elizabeth that we have to blame after all.

When we come to the actual practice of eighteenth century Professors, an arid enumeration of particulars is the safer course: for much injustice may be done to individual merit by hasty generalisation. Attack and incrimination is frequent enough, both within and without the University: calm and reasoned statements are not quite so common; and perhaps one is most likely to arrive at something resembling truth by reading between the lines of apologies for the existing system. In

the very earliest years of the period, documents reprinted by the Oxford Historical Society throw some light on academic teaching. A certain Mr. Maidwell had proposed a scheme for the foundation of a public Academy, to be supported by the nation, where the curriculum should be somewhat more popular and "useful" than that prescribed at the Universities: the subjects for instruction were to be "Græc, Latin, French, history, chronology, astronomy, geometry, navigation, arithmetic, merchants' accounts," besides "dancing, fencing, and riding the great horse": in fact, a sound commercial education (according to the ideas of the time), with "extras." Such a scheme could not but arouse hostility in the Universities, as tending to diminish their *clientèle*; and it is criticised at length by the venerable Dr. Wallis, Savilian Professor and Keeper of the Archives: "a Man," says Hearne, "of most admirable fine Parts and great Industry, whereby in some years he became so noted for his profound Skill in Mathematics, to which he was naturally inclined, that he was deservedly accounted the greatest Person in that Profession of any of his time. He was withall a Good Divine, and no mean Critik in ye Greek and Latin Tongues": in the mouth of that ultra-Tory Hearne, really extraordinary praise of a man who had stood so high in favour with the Puritans as Wallis. From the latter's remarks we should gather that the Professoriate of 1700 was not abnormally active.

Apparently the immediate charge against Professors was that they did not impart "informal instruction" —did not form what we now call a "seminar." "I can give you," says Wallis, "many instances of a like nature with what they call *privata collegia* (or private companies, by voluntary agreement and consociation, for particular parts of usefull knowledge in our universities:) and that there is no cause to complain for want of such." He then proceeds to show that instruction in chemistry, anatomy, botany, mathematics, and astronomy can be and is obtained from Professors and other duly-qualified persons; "and I do not," he says, "know any part of usefull knowledge proper for scholars to learn: but that if any number of persons (gentlemen or others) desire therein to be informed, they may find those in the university who will be ready to instruct them: so that if there be any defect therein it is for want of learners, not of teachers." This principle, as demanding the initiative from the would-be pupil, is not one which would find favour with most moderns; but in 1700 it was apparently held sufficient that University teaching should be procurable—if you could collect a quorum of serious students among your friends, and then had the boldness to approach a Professor who perhaps had already "made other arrangements." As to public Professorial lectures, Dr. Wallis speaks very vaguely; and of the majority of the Professorial body he makes no mention at

all. It is true that his immediate business was to establish the *capacity* of Oxford to give instruction, if required. But after this it is not entirely surprising that a correspondent of *Terræ Filius* should state (in 1720) that no one had lectured publicly in any Faculty, except in poetry and music, for three years past. "Every Thursday morning in term time," this writer continues, "there ought to be a divinity lecture in the divinity school: two gentlemen of our house went one day to hear what the learned professor had to say upon that subject: these two were joined by another master of arts, who without arrogance might think they understood divinity enough to be his auditors: and that consequently his lecture would not have been lost upon them: but the Doctor thought otherwise, who came at last, and was very much surprised to find that there was an audience. He took two or three turns about the school, and then said, *Magistri, vos non estis idonei auditores: præterea, juxta legis doctorem Boucher, tres non faciunt collegium—valete:* and so went away"—on the plea that three do not make a quorum. Such scenes, according to *Terræ Filius*, are enacted in

> "the Public Schools
> Where now a deathlike stillness rules."

Gibbon's strictures on Magdalen College and the University have become, of course, part of the stock-in-trade of every critic of Oxford: such are the privileges of fame. Whatever we are to think

of the value of youthful impressions (Gibbon matriculated at Magdalen in his fifteenth year), these have nothing to do with the Professors of 1752, with whom the historian did not apparently come into contact. His indictment of public teaching applies to the Professoriate of a later day, and is founded on Adam Smith's assertion that the greater part of the public Professors have, for these many years, given up altogether even the pretence of teaching. The assertion is an exaggeration, apparently: nevertheless, Mr. Hurdis' *Vindication of Magdalen College* seems to acquit Adam Smith of a wholly gratuitous libel. The Vindicator does not make out a very brilliant case for the Professors. He enumerates fifteen of the existing twenty, and shows that the Regius Professor of Hebrew, the Prælector in Anatomy, the Vinerian Professor, and the Prælector in Chemistry do actually read on certain days of every week. The remaining eleven either lecture (but, with an economy of erudition, only once a term)—or perform their functions vicariously—or intend to lecture—or have read lectures, but desisted for want of an audience. Thus are fifteen out of twenty "clearly exculpated from Mr. Gibbon's charge." "The remaining five," says Mr. Hurdis, with apparently unconscious humour, "may possibly read their lectures as punctually." It is not a very convincing record of industry. The *Vindication* was published about 1800, a very dark period in the history of

University, as distinct from College, instruction: a few years before this,—about 1790,—professorial teaching would seem to have touched its nadir. This is the period when Oxford takes so sternly practical a view of the duties incumbent on a Professor of Moral Philosophy that his chair is held *ex officio* by one of the Proctors, the very nature of whose office, it is maintained, must lead them to a most satisfactory discharge of the real duties of a Professor of Moral Philosophy. This remarkable identification of the contemplative and practical lives is quoted not by an assailant, but by a champion of Oxonian manners. Things, in fact, were much worse in 1790 than they had been half a century earlier. But in that same year the Professor of Modern History salves his conscience by employing (time-honoured resource!) a deputy, who is not puffed up with pride like modern deputies. On the contrary, he will "wait on gentlemen in their own apartments"—like a barber.

Of course, among the many distinguished men who occupied professorial chairs, there were honourable exceptions to this prevailing reticence. Blackstone, as the first Vinerian Professor, is said to have delivered excellent lectures: Lowth's lectures on Isaiah—delivered, a thing surprising to an age of specialism, when he was Professor of Poetry—mark an epoch in sacred scholarship. It is among the jurists and Orientalists and theologians that we have to look for the best work done by eighteenth

century Oxonians: in these spheres Cambridge confesses her inferiority to a University which can boast the names of Blackstone, Horne, Jones, Hody, Kennicott, and Routh (though Routh's work indeed belongs mainly to the nineteenth century). But it was a period of professorial apathy, on the whole, and outside these spheres few branches of learning really flourished. Resident Oxonians, acquiescing in the undisputed greatness of Aristotle, left little mark on the history of philosophy. Classical scholars of real learning were sadly to seek. Many wrote Latin with facility and elegance —that characteristic of the age: but for the Porsons and Bentleys of Cambridge, Oxford, if her authors are confessed to be numerous indeed, can only produce a number of minor men, names and shadows of names. It would be strange if the temper of the time and its incuriousness of learning were not reflected in the state of University institutions. These were shows, places for sightseers rather than students. Uffenbach visited the Bodleian when at Oxford in 1710; later, he writes to a friend: "I cannot sufficiently deplore the horrible fate" (*sors nefanda*) "of this renowned library. Hardly anybody wishes to use or enjoy this vast storehouse." According to the same writer, Hudson, the librarian of his time, was a man of "stupendous ignorance." "The little life that appears in the library," Dr. Macray writes, "seems to be chiefly devoted to English antiquities, a worthy subject indeed, but

hardly co-extensive with the work of a University or the objects of the library." In Hearne's later days "hardly any learning is sought after but English, Scotch, and Irish history." Neglect of the "fontes" of learning is perhaps a heavier indictment than the slackness of Professors: whom, indeed, it is hard to blame for not teaching. They were to a great extent victims of circumstance. Under existing conditions it was often difficult to find an audience. The Statutes did not compel them to teach, nor was public opinion exacting. National events, which had identified Oxford with a political party and turned the University town into a battlefield, first of arms and then of controversy, had effectively diverted men's thoughts from learning and education, and the old channels were not easily or quickly regained. It does not need the influence of an exceptionally prosaic epoch to distract the mind of an exceptionally practical nation: erudition, at Oxford at least, is constantly endangered by party politics. Such considerations, if they do not excuse, may at least help to explain.

The real gravamen against Professors is that they were slow to produce, not that they were indolent in teaching. In fact, there was hardly any one for them to teach: a deficiency which was due less to the deliberate malignity and avarice of jealous College tutors than to the changed conditions of Oxford life. It must not be forgotten that the

University of early days—the University as we see it during the two centuries following the first foundation of Colleges—was not only what we understand by a University, but also a kind of public school: and its course, from matriculation to the M.A. degree, covered what we call secondary education. Undergraduates were for the most part young boys in their early teens: for the graduate and the graduate alone—who was supposed to attain his Master's degree not as now, by mere passage of time, but by continued residence and a definite course of study, and who, if he contemplated entering a learned profession, might qualify himself by a further prolonged study and residence—can Professorial teaching have been intended. The subsequent silence of teachers is largely to be accounted for by the fact that prolongation of residence after the Bachelor's degree had for the great majority fallen into desuetude before the Laudian reforms. The half-grown boys, who at the close of the seventeenth century formed the greater part of the alumni of the University, were the natural prey not of the Professor but of the College tutor: they required "tutors and governors," and were only very rarely alive to the attractions of extraneous erudition: for the average man, College guardianship and College tuition is always the essential. It is true that—from whatever causes: probably in consequence of the foundation and growth of schools throughout the country—the average age of matric-

ulation had risen: a fact which would itself go far to explain the above-mentioned curtailment of the period of academic residence. Something like the modern system had already begun by 1700. The undergraduate is not quite the schoolboy contemplated by some early College statutes. His average age may, I suppose, be taken as perhaps sixteen to twenty. Some freshmen, indeed, were younger. Gibbon matriculated at fourteen in the middle of the century: Jeremy Bentham in 1760 at twelve: but he was abnormally precocious. Even in 1806, Keble was admitted scholar of Corpus Christi College at fourteen and a half. However, "it would seem," says Mr. Wordsworth, "that students were admitted, on the whole, at a later age than they had been in earlier times;" yet matriculations at fifteen are fairly frequent, and not unknown at an earlier age. We find Oxford in the eighteenth century halting between two states of things. An old system was moribund: and Alma Mater, never exceptionally nimble in adapting herself to changed conditions, had not yet framed the machinery of a new one.

The relation of tutor and pupil is as old as the College system. From the foundation of Merton, the elder students acted as tutors to the younger. At Queen's, the younger boys were to study grammar under a grammar master, and the elder boys logic or philosophy under a teacher belonging to the Faculty of Arts: and "at the beginning of

every meal," writes Sir H. Maxwell Lyte, "the Fellows were to 'oppose' or examine the poor boys" ("poor" is used in a financial sense) "so as to ascertain whether they were making good progress in their studies." This is the tutorial system with a vengeance! According to the early constitution of New College, "five of the Senior Fellows, styled the Deans, exercised a general supervision over the studies of the rest, while others acted as tutors to those who were of less than three years' standing in philosophy or in law, receiving for their labour a certain yearly stipend." Mr. Davis, the historian of Balliol, writes of Bishop Fox, the reformer of that College in 1507: "His constitutional reforms, startling as they appear, were carefully adapted to pre-existent circumstances. There were already nine or ten members of the House who claimed a certain precedence of the rest, either on account of superior standing in the University or because of their official position within the House. He decreed that for the future there should always be ten such persons, all of them Bachelors, Masters, or Doctors, who were to be distinguished from the other inmates of the House by the title of Fellows, and in whose hands the whole of the government was to be vested. To each of them some definite duty was assigned: and all alike were to have a share in the tuition of the juniors." In view of such statements Mr. Wordsworth is surely rather too sweeping when he says

that "in the early days of the Universities the tutorial system was unknown": and that "Laud may be regarded as the author of the system of College tuition": though the Laudian reforms certainly stereotyped existing conditions by insisting on the necessity of allotting pupils to tutors. It would be difficult to generalise as to tutorial stipends. Dr. Richard Newton, Principal of Hart Hall, complains in 1726 that one of his students is lured away to Balliol, where he can get a tutor for nothing: whereas in Hart Hall the youth must pay his tutor as much as thirty shillings a quarter. This, says the Principal, is not a very extravagant demand, "unless learning be the very lowest of all attainments, and the Education of Youth the very worst of all professions." Moreover, "it hath ever been the Practice of Tutors to receive a consideration for their Care:" this consideration being different in different Colleges, and sometimes even between tutors of the same College. The collegiate system was supplemented by private tuition, the private tutor even living sometimes within the College walls. Thus Hearne says that Mr. Atherton of Brasenose, having a College tutor, was also under the care of a nonjuring clergyman, who resided in the College.

The "juniors" whom the Fellows of antiquity were supposed to educate were for the most part, as has been said, young boys: and the Fellows who taught them acted as schoolmasters. But the collective body of eighteenth century

undergraduates, while it contained few qualified to be serious students, included a good many quite old enough to be the prototypes of the moderns, "called emphatically Men." They were unfitted for school discipline. The categorical imperative, which had often been quite sufficient to awake the mental energies of a schoolboy, was not an adequate stimulus to learning among the various delights and liberties of adolescence: unless study was to be a purely perfunctory affair, some further incentive was required. Colleges had not yet seriously undertaken the problem of providing this. It remained for later years to discover a disciplinary *modus vivendi* which should serve (though not without friction) for the government of half-emancipated hobbledehoys, and an educational compromise which should endeavour (it is true, with only partial success) to satisfy alike the serious student and the average man.

It would be, of course, a mistake to suppose that the eighteenth century found Oxford without a properly prescribed and regulated curriculum for her students. There is a regular course of study, intended to cover the seven years from matriculation to the M.A. degree, ordained by the Laudian Statutes: a course which, had it been duly followed, was catholic enough to satisfy the demands of that or indeed of any age. It is no system for the specialist: Oxonians are required to take all knowledge for their province. In the first

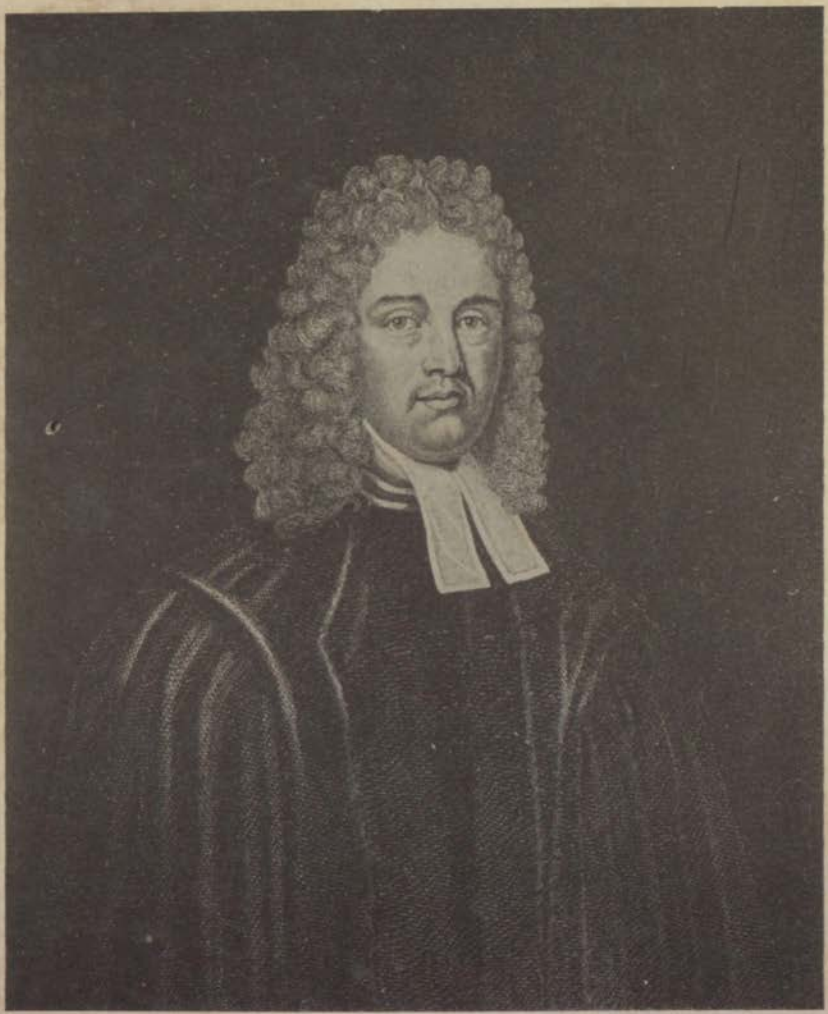
year of residence there are to be lectures on Grammar and Rhetoric. The second is devoted to the study of Aristotle's Ethics and Politics, Logic and Economics: the third and fourth to Logic, Moral Philosophy, Geometry, and Greek: and the three, or nearly three, years intervening between the Bachelor's and Master's degrees are to be given to Geometry, Astronomy, Metaphysics, Natural Philosophy, Ancient History, Greek, and Hebrew. This is comprehensive enough (and has the admirable merit of prescribing a definite course of reading for the Master's degree—surely a desideratum in our own enlightened age). Seven years so spent give a general education,—to provide which is the proper business of Universities,—which equips the learner at all points to face the world: while the would-be divine or lawyer or physician is required to devote several additional years to the pursuit of knowledge in his own special Faculty. But theory, unfortunately, was not supplemented by practice: circumstance—whether the youth of the undergraduate, or the troublous period of the Civil War, or the general slackness which followed the Restoration, is to be held responsible: probably all three causes combined—had rendered the Laudian regulations in reality obsolete. In fact, such comprehensive attempts (however meritorious) to legislate *ab extra* for academic studies rarely, in England, at least, attain their object. As the University examinations, which alone could sanction

and stereotype a prescribed curriculum, were either non-existent or farcical, Colleges—always powerful to resist external interference—followed their own educational inclinations: and while at the worst they left the undergraduate practically untaught, at the best they subjected him to a system which was far in the letter and farther in the spirit from the ordinances of Laud. Hurdis, the "Vindicator" of Magdalen College, writing about the close of the century, describes in detail the official programme of a Magdalen undergraduate's reading during four years of residence. Apparently what the College at that time prescribed did not go beyond "the grand old fortifying classical curriculum," supplemented, of course, by divinity: the list of books which men were required to read and offer for terminal examination is not remarkably varied, nor does it suggest an effort to progress with the developing intelligence: freshmen read Virgil in their first year, and senior men were still "making themselves proficient" in the Georgics at the end of sixteen terms: the curriculum, in short, is a narrow and unreasonable one even for schoolboys, for whom alone it is in any way adapted. Further, there were necessary "declamations": "all young men of three years' standing, whether gentlemen-commoners or dependent members, who belong to Magdalen College, are still called upon to discharge this useful exercise, before the whole College, immediately after dinner, while the society and

their visitants are yet sitting at their respective tables": a custom of which the value lies in the method of its application. Moreover, the student "has to attend, besides, his Tutor's lecture once a day, and must produce a theme or declamation once a week to the Dean"—an official the nature of whose functions suggests the possibility of a disciplinary rather than a purely educational motive for the theme or declamation. These regulations, Hurdis admits, had not ("may not have" is his optimistic phrase) been in force for more than thirty years before the time of writing: and how far the Magdalen of Gibbon's own undergraduate days was a place of study, we really can form very little idea. The College gave special payments in the early part of the century to Hebrew teachers: and in 1741 we hear of a payment to a teacher of French, "Magister Fabre, prælector linguæ Gallicanæ." According to the historian himself (if the impressions of a boy of fifteen be worth consideration), the Magdalen tutors were easy-going men, some of them not without erudition, but seldom energetic in the instruction of youth: perhaps, had Gibbon been a little older and not a gentleman-commoner (belonging, that is, to a class whose interests have seldom been intellectual), the College authorities might have taken him more seriously. He admits that there were tutors of that day who taught, such as John Burton of C.C.C., and William Scott (afterwards Lord Stowell) of

University. Jeremy Bentham, coming up to Queen's at the age of twelve with a fully developed critical faculty, has little good to say of his tutor. Without laying too much stress on the impression of extreme youth, one may infer that, if it is probably an exaggeration to say with Bentham that most tutors and professors were profligate or morose or insipid, most Colleges considered as strictly educational institutions were passing through their darkest hour about 1750 or thereabouts. "My tutor," writes the first Lord Malmesbury, who matriculated at Merton in 1763, "according to the practice of all tutors at that moment, gave himself no concern about his pupils."

In the early days of the century some attempts seem to have been made to stimulate the energy of tutors and lecturers; even Balliol, during most of the period rather a warning than a guide, enjoyed a brief period of ten years (1713–1723) during which its tuition deviated into comparative efficiency. "At Hertford, Dr. Newton," writes the historian of that College, "was determined that the exercises performed in his College, while following the course of those prescribed by the University, should be a reality," there were to be frequent and genuine disputations for undergraduates, and the Principal himself and his Fellows were to lecture constantly and regularly. In short, "it is clear Hertford College undergraduates were kept pretty well at work" under the rule of Dr. Newton,—whose prim



RICHARD NEWTON

FROM AN ENGRAVING AFTER THE PAINTING IN HERTFORD COLLEGE

and formal portrait stamps him for a man of rules and regulations. If it is true of the century in general that (in the words of the historians of New College) "little was taught to the ordinary undergraduate except some formal logic, and as much classical scholarship as was necessary for the making of Latin verses,"—if the "frivolous lectures and unintelligible disputations" which Butler endured at Oriel were the educational stock-in-trade of most foundations—yet attempts were made from time to time to improve the machinery, if not to enlarge the scope, of tuition; and these attempts were made rather at the beginning and the end than in the middle of the period. They followed naturally from the disciplinary regulations which marked the first two decades of the century; and as naturally from the intellectual awakening of its closing years. Generalisation is difficult and unsafe, as the ways of Colleges probably differed more than they do at present, when genuine University examinations have of necessity imposed uniformity of method: but the indications point to some such conclusion. The last half of the century is spoken of as a "golden period" at the University. About 1700 Christ Church, under the rule of Aldrich, was a place of high ideals. The Phalaris controversy, in fact, arose out of the Dean's habit of "encouraging learning among the younger members of Christ Church by assigning to one or other of them the task of editing some classical work," in accordance

with which Mr. Boyle was commissioned to edit the celebrated letters. (These tasks appear to have been occasionally imposed as a kind of penance for offences against collegiate discipline—in one instance for the grave error of falling in love.) Ten years later, Atterbury as Dean "is said to have been zealous in promoting the studies of undergraduates": and during the first half of the century, at least, Christ Church men appear to have done something at least for the humaner letters by prefixing copies of "light verse" (in Latin, of course) to the serious and arid disputations which newly-made B.A.'s were bound to deliver in the schools—jam, as it were, to make the academic powder palatable. At Lincoln, from 1730 to 1740, learning flourished, and the College chronicler speaks of a "golden age": while at the other side of Brasenose Lane, Conybeare, one of the most active heads of the age, was reforming the tutorial system of Exeter,—none too soon,—and even venturing on the Utopian reform of an equalisation of work and wages. From Exeter, Conybeare was translated to the Deanery of Christ Church, "to cleanse," it was said, "that Augean stable": possibly the morals of the House needed purification: intellectually there is no doubt that it may pass for the show College of the century. Nicholas Amherst, who has a hard word for most of his contemporaries, has no graver charge against Christ Church men in 1733 than that of undue pride—whether based

on superiority of birth or of intellect. "Its tutors," the satirist admits, "are intelligent." Towards the close of the century Gibbon records that "a course of classical and philosophical studies is proposed, and even pursued, in that numerous seminary: learning has been made a duty, a pleasure, and even a fashion: and several young gentlemen do honour to the College in which they have been educated" under the auspices of Bagot and Cyril Jackson, the friend of Peel. Christ Church men were noted in these years for their attainments in "pure" scholarship; and already in 1760, or thereabouts, the *Oxford Magazine* of that day speaks of "Christ Church pedants."

In common justice to an unpopular period, it is only fair to add to Gibbon's mature judgment Dr. Johnson's opinion of College tuition as he saw it in his later visits to Oxford. "There is here, Sir" (in 1798), "such a progressive emulation. The students are anxious to appear well to their tutors: the tutors are anxious to have their pupils appear well in the College: the Colleges are anxious to have their students appear well in the University: and there are excellent rules of discipline in every College." Perhaps something has to be allowed for the fact that Oxford stood, in its way, for principles which the Doctor considered essential to the salvation of society. Still, the dictum is at the service of optimistic historians.

Johnson's own College, which he called a nest

of singing birds, and which directed the studies at the same time of the lexicographer and George Whitefield, must have taxed the versatility of its tutors. Johnson himself does not praise Dr. Jorden's intellectual ability, but allows him the higher credit of treating his pupils as if they were his sons. Similarly, Whitefield's tutor was "like a father" to him, under circumstances which may have been trying to the academic disciplinarians of that age. As for Shenstone and Graves and the other singing birds, their literary coteries and their interest in the remoter and less-known classics must have lain outside the groove of College teaching, and been rather tolerated than encouraged by authority.

Much light is thrown on these matters and on the relation of collegiate tuition to the steady reading-man (whom it is a comfort to find existing among the conventional voluptuaries who crowd the pages of the satirist) by the ample correspondence of John James of Queen's College, the virtuous and diligent son of a north-country clergyman. James was an undergraduate of Queen's from 1778 to 1781, a period which he represents as a dark age in the annals of that institution ; other records of its studies make it probable that the young man was a little hypercritical. Rightly or wrongly, from the first he was very ill-satisfied with such efforts as the College made for his instruction : in fact, the expressions used by himself and his correspondents are

such as hardly bear repetition in modern days when all tutors are virtuous. He had no taste for logic, —"a kind of freemasonry—mysterious, dark, and apparently impenetrable,"—but being a docile if somewhat priggish youth (and one who with the stimulus of emulation "finds no study irksome and no exercise tedious") he grapples with *Logicæ Artis Compendium*, and has "had the honour of proving to the Doctor's satisfaction that it must be either night or day." Queen's had at this time, we are told, considerable reputation for its logic. In the library (says "Shepilinda" in her curious "Memoir") "all the books except the Treatises concerning logick are grown a small matter mouldy." James declaimed in Hall, according to the custom then esteemed salutary, and attended the declamations of others. "They clapt a declamation on me three days after I got to College"—this was after three years' residence—"and Mr. Dowson . . . summons me to hall at twelve o'clock, to hear for half an hour or more bad Latin, bad arguments, and bad philosophy." James' real interests lay elsewhere; he was what is now sometimes called a "mere scholar": indeed the best intellect of his contemporaries was directed towards linguistic and literary studies, for which College teaching generally did little more than to lay a meagre foundation; and even a comparatively advanced Hellenist like James writes Greek without accents. He regarded College exercises and lectures as interruptions to serious

reading, perhaps not unjustifiably. Later, we find him studying chemistry, a subject which "promises to afford a firm and elegant basis for a compleat skill in Natural Philosophy, . . . and certainly will enable any divine in Europe to describe with confidence the operation by which Moses might have reduced the golden calf to powder,—to the confusion of Voltaire and all his disciples." This is not the temper of the narrow specialist, pursuing chemistry as an end in itself. Whether or not (as is suggested by Dr. Wall, the lecturer, a scholar and one who can diversify his compilations with elegant learning) chemistry was "an immediate revelation from Heaven to Adam, and had its name from Cham, the progenitor of the Egyptians," at any rate by 1781 it had become an instrument for enlarging the mind and softening the manners,—a subject that no truly liberal education could afford to ignore. James' studies are perhaps characteristic of the better sort of contemporary Oxonian. Those who took the University seriously regarded it as a place of general education,—general preparation for the battle of life, —not as a school for specialists: nor has it yet been proved that they were wholly wrong. To James, chemistry was like the French and music which occupied a good deal of his residence—an elegant and desirable accomplishment. Of course there was always the danger lest this catholicity of interest might degenerate, as it often did, into the merest dilettantism—the habit of mind of George Eliot's Mr.

Brooke, who went in for science a great deal himself at one time, but saw it would not do, because it led to everything, and pulled up in time. That memorable man would have been more at home in the eighteenth than in the nineteenth century.

On the whole one is driven to the conclusion that during most of the century and at most Colleges comparatively little help was given to the learner: and if Lincoln and University could boast a "golden" period, it was probably the gold of mediocrity. There were some good tutors; and their uncompelled virtue deserves the greater praise when one remembers that at least as late as Johnson's day many undergraduates remained in residence for practically the whole year, and John Wesley speaks of instruction going on regularly in the vacations. But the scope even of the best was unduly limited by circumstances; and teaching Fellows seem to have regarded tuition rather as an interlude and *πάρεργον* than the business of their working lives. The relations between tutor and pupil were formal, and—unless perhaps in cases where the pupil might be considered as a future patron, with fat livings in his gift—probably very few tutors endeavoured to humanise them: the pleasant and useful comradeship between Don and Man, teacher and taught, which has later been one of the best sides of academic life, was as yet apparently unknown. Yet undoubtedly with the closing years of the century matters begin to improve: the very

establishment of "Greats" proves that educational ideals were rising. Writing in 1815, an undergraduate of Corpus Christi College says: "The generality of men read very much": and in the next year, "our tutors are most excellent, one of them most exquisite. . . . Business is a pleasure under tutors who excite so much interest towards it": a state of things which may, of course, be due to the influence of the new examination system, but is more probably traceable to less recent causes,—those, in fact, which had themselves produced the said system. It is true that the scheme of reading described by the writer is not what we should call remarkably comprehensive. But it satisfied the ideas of the time; and this is no mean achievement At any rate, modern Oxford has sometimes been reproached for being unequal to it.

IV

FELLOWSHIPS

TO the general public, its older Universities are naturally aggregates of Colleges: and Colleges are sometimes (though it is often a misleading criterion) judged according to the popular estimation of their Fellows. These are the obvious and patent element in the University, rightly enough held responsible for the condition of the whole body: and it is the standing crux of academic reformers to bring Fellows and Fellowships into line with modern ideas of "efficiency" without shattering their meritorious programmes against the brazen wall of Collegiate tradition. To the outside observer, in short, the College Don is all-important, whether for good or for evil. Universities without Dons—without, that is, a definite governing class, as clearly marked off from undergraduates as schoolmasters from schoolboys — are not conceivable. Yet it is necessary to remind the public that not only Universities but even Colleges have existed without Fellows. These latter, as a separate genus, were not contemplated by the earliest of our pious

founders: like other important English institutions, they were not made: they "kinder growed." During more than a century after the first foundation of a College, that is (for it is no longer customary to credit Alfred with the endowment of University College) from the later part of the thirteenth to the close of the fourteenth century, the early collegians are all alike "scholares," seniors and juniors: no hard distinction is drawn, as in our day, between governors and governed, "Don" and "Man": and the occasional mention of "socii," as in the early chronicles of University College, need not imply a broad line of division. But about 1400 (roughly) the inevitable fact of the permanence of some "scholares" and the transitoriness of others,—causing Colleges to be, no doubt, practically ruled by the older students,—comes to be recognised officially and made a basis of subsequent legislation: lawmakers, according to the good English custom, taking into account and regularising conditions which they found in existence. From this time forward framers of College statutes use the term "socius" in its modern sense of a senior member, and therefore a governor of the foundation. "The word Fellow" (say the historians of New College) "in the Middle Ages meant simply comrade, fellow-student: in a more technical sense, members of the organised and self-governing community, which lived in the same Hall, called one another 'Fellows.' The name naturally passed to the

members of the endowed Hall or College: Wykeham took the first step towards the specialisation of the term by reserving it (though still with the epithets 'true and perpetual') to the full or governing members of the body. It was only later and very gradually that the term 'scholar' came to signify distinctively the inferior and merely temporary class of foundationers"—what we know, in short, as the undergraduate scholar. The foundation statutes of early Colleges draw no clear dividing line. Some scholars were young, some old: those who had made up their minds to remain at Oxford would naturally assume authority over the newcomers: all alike were under the same rule, enjoying the benefits of their Founder while they stayed in the College, and no longer. That a Fellowship could be held without residence—except under certain specified conditions—was considered even in the eighteenth century to be a scandal.

No doubt the imagined model for the earliest Fellows was something like Chaucer's clerk of Oxenford:

> "For him was levere have at his beddes heede
> Twenty bookes, clad in blak or reede,
> Of Aristotle and his philosophye,
> Than robes riche, or fithele, or gay sawtrye":

the ideal would be a studious recluse, one that would gladly learn and gladly teach, protected by College walls from the broils and turmoils which disturbed the academic life of medieval "unattached

students." But Collegiate cloisters brought their own distractions—the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches. Colleges were not only societies of serious students: they were also self-governing communities, in most cases owners of land. Within their walls, disputes about constitutions and founders' intentions and difficulties of estate management menaced the ideal of the clerk of Oxenford; outside, the times were often troublous, and even the impetus given by the Revival of Learning hardly balanced the agitating effect of the Wars of the Roses, or the Reformation. Oxford has always been keenly sensitive to agitations of the body politic, and, for good or evil, never neglected by the governing forces of the country,—least of all, when Governments are insecure and need support or fear hostility from seminaries of political or religious opinion. As the University came to be more and more an aggregate of Colleges, so its Colleges were in an increasing degree objects of the patronage or the suspicion of Governments; and Fellowships, as they increased in value, came to be regarded by statesmen, lay and ecclesiastic, as rewards for political support or religious orthodoxy. From reign to reign, the position of Fellows was insecure. The disendowment and dissolution of monasteries might have afforded a dangerous precedent: that peril, it is true, Colleges escaped, and Henry VIII. openly championed their interests ("I love not

learning so ill that I will impair the revenues of anie one House by a penie, whereby it may be upholden"): but the Reformation dealt hardly with them. Fellows were expelled by Edward VI. for Catholicism and by Mary for Protestantism. Leicester's Chancellorship definitely excluded Roman Catholics from the University. By the time of the Civil War a Fellow had come to be regarded as the holder of certain political opinions and a sinecure. These political opinions were mostly hostile to Parliamentarians: much Government interference had effectually inculcated in Oxonians the advisability of loyalty to the monarchy. Charles was popular at Oxford, and the University owed much to Laud: Cavalier Fellows were therefore extruded by victorious Puritanism, and duly restored (if still capable of holding Fellowships) in 1661. Through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the seesaw of alternate expulsion and restoration went on with unabated vigour, and the changing personnel of College governing bodies marked the political state of England with the regularity of a barometer. James II.'s attempt to intrude a Roman Catholic President into Magdalen was no isolated act of tyranny: it was merely the continuation of the policy of his predecessors in government during the preceding two hundred years. It is the misfortune of College Fellows that the events of history so long taught them to associate well-being, not

with advancement of learning, but with adherence to a party or a sect. Even now the effects of that teaching are not altogether extinct.

Precarious tenure of fairly lucrative positions produced long before the eighteenth century such results as might be expected. Some of the customary abuses which flourished without let or hindrance in the age of Victoria had already begun to show themselves under Elizabeth. That obvious method of enriching oneself, to the detriment of one's successors, by exacting fines on the granting of long leases at low rentals, had to be checked by an Elizabethan statute; but the statute was evaded. Further legislation in the same reign was directed against the "corrupt resignation"—practically sale—of Fellowships. Edward VI.'s Visitors, who expelled Papists, "anticipated modern reforms" (Mr. Brodrick writes in his *History of Oxford*) by making "fellowships terminable, and tenable only on condition of six months' residence"—an injunction which implies that the non-resident Fellow is not of yesterday. Non-residents have indeed been far more common in the nineteenth than in any previous century; yet it must be remembered that absenteeism is a less crime in an age of facility of communication, when the absentee need not altogether lose touch with his College. And even residents were not always what they should be: Harrison, in his *Description of Britaine* (under Elizabeth), laments the existence of men who "after

forty years of age . . . give over their wonted diligence and live like drone bees on the fat of Colleges." *Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona*: there were good easy men supinely enjoying the benefits of the founder, before the days of Mr. Gibbon.

At the opening of the eighteenth century many Fellows are already "living like drone bees on the fat of Colleges"—and that not only after they had come to "forty year." The abuses of which we have since heard so much are not nascent and in the bud, but fully developed. Fellows are already too rich and too idle. They do not use their endowments as a temporary support until they shall have qualified themselves for the service of the public—the true object of pious Founders—but as permanent pensions for indolence: they live all their lives within the College walls, where they are "overrun with the spleen, and grow sottish." It is to the credit of the age that it is dissatisfied with its Universities in this and in other respects: reforms are mooted: if hell is paved with good intentions, the infernal regions owe much of their pavement to the earlier part, at least, of the eighteenth century. Dean Prideaux, sketching a comprehensive scheme of administration for Universities, makes a notable proposal that Fellows of twenty years' standing, who have not qualified themselves for the public service, should be relegated to a kind of almshouse ("Drone Hall" was the nickname for the suggested institution),

there to be supported by a pittance from their Colleges: which could not justly complain of being charged with the maintenance of these effete persons, because a College ought to have brought its Fellows up better. This is proof positive of the existence of many Fellows who did nothing by virtue of their office: such were already the despair of the reformer and the stock-in-trade of the satirist. The characteristic type, which is only now beginning to disappear from such literature as troubles itself with University matters, was formed before the reign of Queen Anne.

Satire, and especially the satire of his juniors (unconscious that of them too the fable may one day be narrated), has never spared this academic type; and caricatures of Dons in the eighteenth century had the added charm of novelty. The idle Fellow is the recognised butt of poetasters in the collection of verses called the *Oxford Sausage*:

"Within those walls, where thro' the glimmering shade
Appear the pamphlets in a mould'ring heap,
Each in his narrow bed till morning laid,
The peaceful Fellows of the College sleep.

"The tinkling bell proclaiming early prayers,
The noisy servants rattling o'er their head,
The calls of business, and domestic cares,
Ne'er rouse these sleepers from their downy bed.

"No chatt'ring females crowd their social fire,
No dread have they of discord and of strife:
Unknown the names of Husband and of Sire,
Unfelt the plagues of matrimonial life.

"Oft have they bask'd along the sunny walls,
Oft have the benches bow'd beneath their weight:
How jocund are their looks when dinner calls!
How smoke the cutlets on their crowded plate!"

"When any person," says Nicholas Amherst of St. John's, writing in 1726, "is chosen fellow of a college, he immediately becomes a freeholder, and is settled for life in ease and plenty. . . . He wastes the rest of his days in luxury and idleness: he enjoys himself, and is dead to the world: for a senior fellow of a college lives and moulders away in a supine and regular course of eating, drinking, sleeping, and cheating the juniors." Truly the Fellow of the later Victorian era has had much to live down. One of the Christ Church "Carmina Quadragesimalia" gives a picture of a Senior Fellow's daily life as an illustration of the thesis "An idem semper agat idem": it is not so very long ago since there were some who might have sat for the portrait, "Isis" (or else "Cherwell") "qua lambit muros!" It may be thus copied in English:

"On Isis' banks the gazer may behold
An ancient Fellow in a College old,
Who lives by rule, and each returning day
Ne'er swerves a hairbreadth from the same old way.
Always within the memory of men
He's risen at eight and gone to bed at ten:
The same old cat his College room partakes,
The same old scout his bed each evening makes:
On mutton roast he daily dines in state
(Whole flocks have perished to supply his plate),

> Takes just one turn to catch the westering sun,
> Then reads the paper, as he's always done:
> Soon cracks in Common-room the same old jokes,
> Drinking three glasses ere three pipes he smokes:—
> And what he did while Charles our throne did fill
> 'Neath George's heir you'll find him doing still!"

Towards the end of the century James of Queen's, with the uncompromising severity of a serious student, deals more harshly with the dignitaries of his College. One would think that the gardens of New College or Wadham or Magdalen Walks should be haunted by the gentle ghosts of such ancient pensioners, revisiting the glimpses of the moon even in these changed and bustling days. But there are no ghosts in Oxford. Either the perennial renascence of youth scares them away: or perhaps they are afraid of being investigated by the Society for Psychical Research.

Satire and youthful acrimony need not, it is true, be taken too seriously. A cynical and uncharitable world always presumes idleness where there is a lack of obvious incentive to activity: and is perhaps inclined to take too little account of the business of governing a College—a task often laborious and sometimes even useful, to which many men vilified as sinecurists have devoted years of unobtrusive and therefore unrecognised energy. But satire finds its justification in the circumstances of the time, which were such as to make idleness only too probable.

Fellows of Colleges are supposed, unlike the

majority of men, to combine the practical with the contemplative life. Two hundred years ago it was the latter which was held most dangerous, as tending to create the futile recluse—"a fellow that puts on lined slippers and sits reasoning all the morning, then goes to his meat when the bell rings": the Don of to-day is rather exposed to the more insidious and perhaps equally demoralising influences of the former—more insidious, because the life of action is supposed to be more closely allied with virtue or at least respectability. As every one knows, it is the glory of the present enlightened age that it has invented for graduates so many forms of beneficent or at least not obviously maleficent activity. All sorts of occupations, salaried or otherwise, await the choice of the resident Fellow. He may teach and examine, he may help to rule his College, or sit on the multifarious boards and committees which govern the University. "Movements," academic or not, clamour for his support or opposition: he may identify himself with reform or obscurantism: he may debate in Congregation and in Council whether Oxford ought to approximate to the ideals of the Middle Ages or of the midland counties. Meantime the "ordinary" Fellow who does not reside is certainly not tempted to abuse his short tenure: his seven years' income is an assistance to action, which widens his field of choice, and provides the necessary help which starts him on the avenue

to the mitre or the woolsack or the editorial chair.

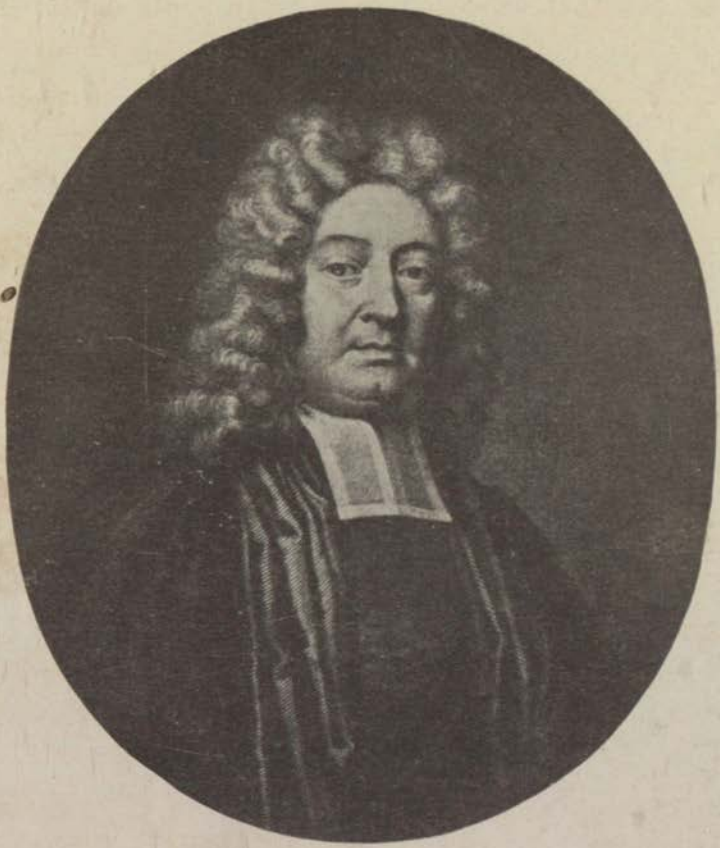
But outlets for resident academic energy are largely the creation of the nineteenth century, and were for the most part unknown to its predecessor. The junior Fellow of those days must have suffered severely from lack of occupation. He had but little share in the administration of his own College, further than registering the decrees of the seniors, in whose hands almost all power was vested. A close corporation of Heads of Houses governed the University: the subjects of most eighteenth century debates in Convocation must have been narrow and personal, the academic mind being not as yet agitated by those larger and more interesting questions which have been forced upon Oxford in the last half-century by closer contact with the life of the country in general: for the ordinary Master, University business would consist in the very frequent (some say an annual sixty or more) meetings of Congregation to confer degrees,—a matter in which spite and jobbery found ample scope. College tuition was hardly the business of the majority, and few tutors, as we have seen, were vividly alive to their responsibilities: and the examinations of the day can have been no serious part of the business of life. Under the circumstances it was inevitable that (unless he had the good fortune to belong to a College at war within itself, as many Colleges were at different times in the eighteenth century)

the average Fellow should succumb to the pressure of the system to which he was born, and, unless nature had formed him for fiery energies, should devote his days to mild amusements and his evenings to coffee-house discussion of national politics which he could do nothing to influence. It is easy to say that he should have roused himself to reconstruct the system. Of course he should: but humanity being what it is, the average well-meaning man in all ages cannot be expected to do more than make the best of existing circumstances. No doubt many men were well enough satisfied with the comparative ease and comfort of a competence and life in College: but the active-minded who wished to do something in life were necessarily on the horns of a dilemma: there was little employment in Oxford, and (non-residence being, as has been said, far more severely discouraged than in the nineteenth century) they were forbidden to seek it elsewhere on pain of losing their Fellowships,—until towards the end of the century custom began to allow considerable leave of absence. It is true that the rule of residence was sometimes relaxed for the benefit of Fellows invited to act as tutors or chaplains to persons of quality,—an obvious road to preferment, not without its possible advantages for the College. Dr. Lancaster, of Queen's College, "when he was a Junior Fellow, liv'd some time as Chaplain to the Earl of Denbigh: but in a little time return'd to the College, and became Tutor to several young

Gentlemen, and particularly to a Younger Son of that Earl's. A little while after this 'twas his good fortune to be remov'd from Oxford (where for the sake of good Company he neglected most of his business)"—we must remember that Dr. Lancaster was not what Hearne calls an "honest" man—"to the Bishop of London, and became his Domestick Chaplaine." *Ex uno disce*—at least *multos*. In Oxford itself there were of course ample opportunities for serious study: and in truth many a student of to-day harassed by the exigencies of our more strenuous age and the difficulty of finding fresh fields and pastures new not yet invaded by the industrious Teuton, may envy the ampler leisure of Hearne's contemporaries, and their larger opportunities for original treatment. And indeed there were makers of books in plenty among the Dons of that day. But comparatively little work was produced which has stood the test of time: which is perhaps the gravest count in the indictment of the period.

Serious study is not for all. The great majority of Fellows simply enjoyed the benefits of their Founders until it should be possible for them to take a living and a wife: Warton's description (in the *Oxford Sausage*) may be taken as generally applicable. A victim to the "Progress of Discontent," the hopeful scholar of his College

> "intent on new designs
> Sighs for a Fellowship—and Fines.



WILLIAM LANCASTER

FROM AN ENGRAVING AFTER THE PAINTING BY T. MURRAY

When nine full tedious winters past,
That utmost wish is crown'd at last;
But the rich prize no sooner got,
Again he quarrels with his lot:
'These Fellowships are pretty things,
We live indeed like petty kings:
But who can bear to waste his whole age
Amid the dullness of a College,
Debarr'd the common joys of life,
And that prime bliss—a loving Wife?
O! what's a Table richly spread
Without a Woman at its head!
Would some fat Benefice but fall,
Ye Feasts, ye Dinners! farewell all!
To Offices I'd bid adieu,
Of Dean, Vice-praes,—of Bursar too;
Come joys, that rural quiet yields,
Come Tythe, and House, and fruitful Fields!'
Too fond of liberty and ease
A Patron's vanity to please,
Long time he watches, and by stealth,
Each frail Incumbent's doubtful health;
At length—and in his fortieth year,
A living drops—two hundred clear!"

—only, as it appears, to leave the fortunate holder still afflicted by that divine discontent which is especially fostered by academies.

To be continually waiting and hoping for "something to turn up" is not a wholesome attitude: and eighteenth century Oxford was demoralised by its constant looking for "preferment," whether by lucky accident or personal favour. But even the Fellow greedily watching the failing health of an incumbent is better off than the ex-scholar who keeps an equally keen eye on the possible preferment of the Fellow. In those

days of limited possibilities of occupation, Colleges seem to have been haunted by graduates qualified for succession to Fellowships, and anxiously waiting till one should fall vacant. These unfortunate expectants were in most cases obliged to remain in residence on pain of forfeiting their chance of succession—sometimes the period of suspense would last a dozen years. At Corpus (and probably elsewhere as well) the "Disciple Masters of Arts," as they were called, received a regular allowance: but this was a mere pittance, insufficient for their needs: and we find them in 1755 obtaining relief at the hands of the Visitor from the necessity of remaining in Oxford, waiting for dead men's shoes. Obviously the evil was a crying one. "Their residence," say the petitioners, "deprives them at the same time of relieving their circumstances and of following any useful vocation." "One cannot," says Dr. Fowler, the historian of the College, "but look back with extreme pity on the dull and useless lives of these young men, many of them with no special avocation for literature, spent in narrow circumstances, uncongenial surroundings, and enforced idleness. If they took to drinking, excessive cardplaying, and loose habits, one can hardly feel much surprise." Till 1768, M.A. scholars of Trinity must reside constantly if they wanted Fellowships. At Magdalen, Demies, territorially chosen, succeeded to territorial Fellowships sometimes ten or even fifteen years from matriculation.

It can hardly be said that the long-expected prize was such as would satisfy the avaricious: still a Fellowship was a competence. A Fellow could live fairly well for about £100 a year: at Hart Hall this was about the income of the senior members of the governing body: Prideaux' scheme for University reform proposes the limitation of all Fellowships to £60, which one may perhaps take as something over the minimum "living wage" for Oxonians in 1715. Many no doubt received less: Dr. Newton speaks of Fellowships of £40 as a typical sum: and the new foundation of Worcester (1714) provided that the six Fellows should receive £30 a year each, and the scholars £13, 6s. 8d. But there were doubtless innumerable pickings and perquisites. The wealth of a Fellow depended more than it does now on the financial circumstances of his College: even in our own day it is difficult to generalise as to these entirely independent societies. What is abundantly clear is that a Fellowship was considered to be a prize worth taking some little trouble to obtain, both as an immediate competence and as the probable stepping-stone to future wealth in the shape of a substantial living: and if electors had to condescend to a little jobbery —which did not, indeed, subject the average conscience to a very severe strain—the desirability of the end might be held to justify the somewhat questionable means. It is to be feared that we cannot credit the eighteenth century with a pedantic

purity in the matter of College elections: both candidates and electors were prepared to stretch a point occasionally. The qualification for candidature in the case of a would-be Fellow was generally the accident of birth in a particular locality: and some candidates appear to have been born in nearly as many places as Homer. "Mr. Elstobb," says Hearne, . . . "when he was of Queen's College appeared a candidate for a Fellowship of All Souls' passing for a South Country man, but missing this became a Northern man, and was upon that elected one of Skirlaw's Fellows of University College. The same Trick was played by one Dr. Skapleton, who had a Yorkshire Scholarship in University Coll. and afterwards a Fellowship of All Souls' as born in ye Province of Canterbury. Likewise one Mr. Rob. Grey, first a commoner of Queen's Col. and afterwards Fellow of All Souls', his Parents and Friends living all in NewCastle upon Tine, upon pretence yt he was accidentally dropt in London, obtained a place in Chichley's Foundation,"—which seems to have offered peculiar temptations to the frail, and to have been distinguished by the credulity of its electors.

It is interesting to find one College historian commenting with apparent severity on the fact that his College even two hundred years ago would elect no Fellows save its own men. Such seems to have been its invariable practice: but perhaps the justification which later ages have

pleaded was absent. When the governing body was reprimanded by the Visitor for the amiable failing of regarding members of the College with excessive partiality, its defence was obvious: extraneous persons might be all very well as to mere intellect, but you could never be sure about their moral character. How far the examination of candidates was anywhere a reality under the circumstances, we are only permitted to conjecture. Fellows were undoubtedly elected (according to the convenient formula still known to one College at least) "after an examination." Most Colleges appear to have proposed some kind of intellectual test: Merton elected a batch of no less than seven Fellows in 1705: "they stile it ye Golden Election because they are all Excell[t] Scholars," says Hearne, "especially three or four of them are said to be as good as any in Oxford of their standing." In the following year University elected Mr. Hodgson, a Bachelor of Arts of about ten years' standing: "a person well skill'd in Greek and Latin (as appear'd from his performance when examin'd) who may be a Credit to the College, if he please, being of a Strong Body, and able to go thro' some laudable undertaking." Evidently there were examinations. But we are left in ignorance as to the details: no examination papers have survived: and we know that in these matters the ideals of the eighteenth century were not ours. Evidently also "interest" played its part in

elections. Hearne records an examination at Oriel where nine candidates stood for three vacancies. Oriel, Merton, and Wadham supplied the successful aspirants: and Hearne is very bitter against the electors for passing over Mr. Johnson of Christ Church, who "stood and perform'd better, at least as well as any." "One of ye Electors has himself declar'd that he was engag'd sometime before the time of Tryal by a Gentleman in ye Country"—a plain proof that things are managed by interest and not by merits: and indeed the diarist complains in 1727 that "learning is very little or not at all regarded" in elections to Fellowships. But the reasons of "interest" (a thing hard to define) may be manifold. Very often what charity would describe as an amiable wish to see merit in one's friends may be stigmatised by hostile critics as a discreditable job. In any case Hearne is no safe guide: for his diagnosis of character is nearly always determined by political feeling: and probably Mr. Johnson of Christ Church was an "honest" man, while his successful rivals were Whigs.

On the whole it appears that the temptations of a Fellowship, by whatever methods it was to be attained, were usually strong enough for the average man of no vaulting ambitions. Its value might be enhanced in various ways which our higher morality disapproves. *Terræ Filius*, that bitter enemy of most academic dignitaries, must not, of course, be always taken quite literally: but as the general

trend of evidence does not contradict his strictures, the reader is entitled to conclude that so much smoke is an indication at least of some fire. According to this satirist the Don of the period (1726) adds to the income of his Fellowship in various ways: "not content with overgrown fellowships for life, and college offices, they have lately found out a method of augmenting them with good livings, which according to statute and prescription are untenable together."

It was not a very scrupulous age. The system of "corrupt resignation"—under which Fellows were understood to nominate their successors, receiving a substantial consideration for so doing—had indeed been abolished at All Souls', where the abuse had been particularly rampant, not long before 1700. But at New College it appears that in 1715 Fellowships were openly bought and sold. Pluralism remained and flourished: indeed it is only in comparatively recent years that public opinion has been severe upon the pluralist. Fellows compelled by statute to celibacy did nevertheless marry—on the principle that you can hold anything if you hold your tongue. Where "Founder's kin" had a preferential claim to election to Fellowships, as at All Souls', the statute appears to have been applied (after the College had indeed protested against the tyrannous claims of consanguinity) with some considerable latitude: the "blood of Chichele" was found to

flow in previously unsuspected channels: and the system of co-optation on family or social grounds turned that College at the close of the eighteenth and the earlier part of the nineteenth century into a preserve for a privileged circle of families. This particular abuse, like other corruptions of the system, grew and flourished more vigorously at the end than at the beginning of the eighteenth century: indeed it may be broadly stated that while on the whole Colleges grow more conscientious in educational matters after 1750 or thereabouts, their ideas as to the tenure of Fellowships and qualifications of candidates tend to become not more but less rigorous: and the academic opinion of 1830 or 1840 is in these matters of a most complaisant laxity. Withal, it is quite clear that individually the Fellow of the early nineteenth century bore a much better character than his predecessor. There is no doubt that the age of Anne and the two first Georges saw more of the wholly idle and "apolaustic" Don.

To the genial humorist of the *Oxford Sausage* the Fellow is primarily an eating animal—a "Gormandizing Drone," as Miller's much earlier "Humours of Oxford" puts it: "a dreaming, dull Sot, that lives and rots, like a Frog in a Ditch, and goes to the Devil at last, he scarce knows why." Coming between the two last-quoted "authorities," the notorious *Terræ Filius* of 1733 describes senior members of Colleges as generally votaries of

ST. GILES'

FROM AN ENGRAVING BY J. SKELTON AFTER THE DRAWING BY A. ROOKER

pleasure in one form or another. Masters of Arts at New College have a very bad character: that learned foundation is composed of "golden scholars, silver bachelors, leaden masters." But Shepilinda the scandalous, with all her feminine suspicion of Colleges, says that New College men all follow the precept, Manners makyth Man—"especially the polite Mr. Dobson," a person unknown to fame but easy to imagine. All Souls' men are "smarts and gallant gentlemen": if a man in a play wishes to personate a Fellow of Brasenose he must "wear a pillow for a stomach": at Lincoln, Shepilinda finds no customs except gaming and guzzling; however, "they go to prayers twice a day." This is probably mere fooling: yet the years about 1733 certainly do not constitute a bright period in the annals of Colleges: and it is noteworthy that in this very year a satire was published attacking Fellows of various foundations with peculiar virulence. It is true that the author appears to have been an embittered Whig. According to him, the Fellows of Magdalen

> "drink, look big,
> Smoke much, think little, curse the freeborn Whig."

Bowling and drinking, according to Shepilinda, are the "two chief studies of this worthy Body"; while at Queen's, under the rule of "Morosus,"

> "Pride and ill nature chiefly o'er them reign,
> Learnedly dull, or ignorantly vain:

Without wealth haughty, without merit proud,
In virtue silent, but in factions loud:
Upholders of old superstitious rules,
Dull in the Pulpit, Triflers in the Schools;
To Power superior none such hatred bear,
Though none exact their own with greater Care."

In the (very serious) *Advice to a Young Man of Fortune and Rank upon his Entrance to the University*, published, apparently, towards the close of the century, it is pointed out that *even Fellows* should be treated with outward decorum. Even though there may be "some not much to be revered for either erudition or virtue," still "the rules of decent behaviour" must be observed towards them. This is not very encouraging: it is an equally serious matter when we find that picturesque satire is at least not contradicted by sober record: when a Fellow of New College is found guilty of robbery: when the historian of All Souls' has to chronicle riotous behaviour, open violation of the statutes by marriage, refusals to take Orders, nay even the keeping of dogs within the College walls. No doubt these were scandals. But it is imprudent to draw conclusions as to the state of the University in general from the undeniable fact that College history shows—at least in the earlier part of the century—a Newgate Calendar of irregularities and derelictions of what we consider duty. The historian of Oriel touches the heart of the matter when he tells us that in the history of his College "dull annals in the eighteenth century are an almost

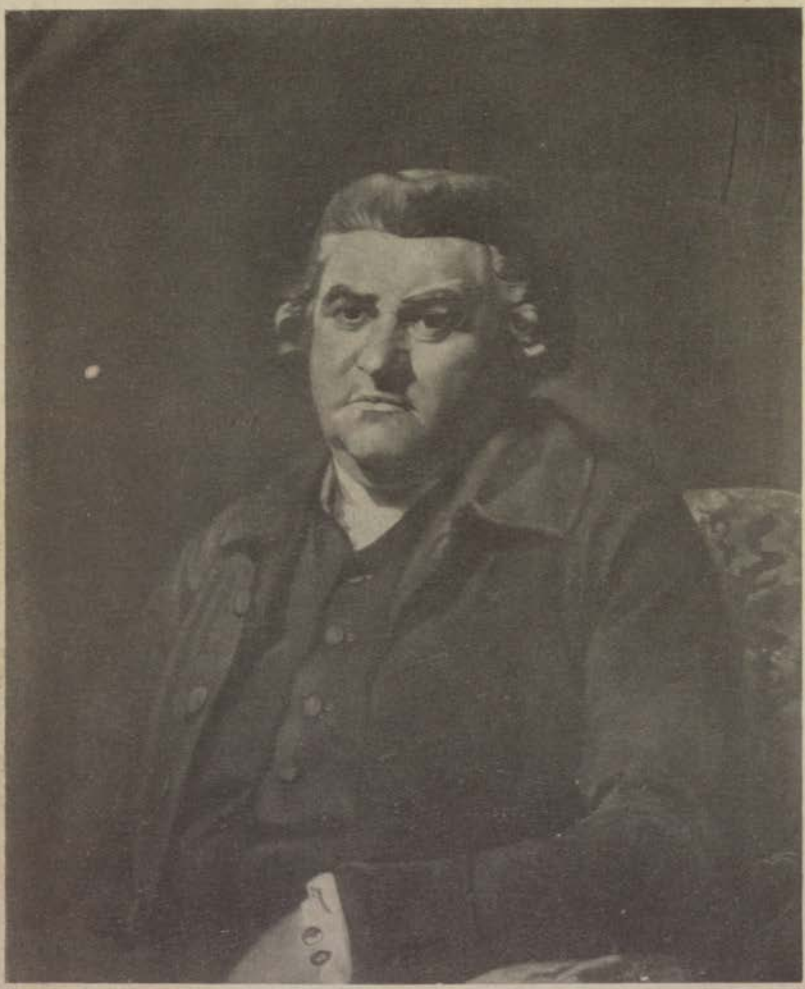
infallible indication of creditable behaviour"—that Oriel is happiest when it has no history. Detected crime is always chronicled, and very often makes interesting reading: but no College has kept a record of the virtuous acts of its members. It is inevitable that academic vice should be more prominent on the page of history than academic virtue. In the worst ages there have been good tutors and active administrators of their respective societies: but the good tutor (unless, which is not very often the case, he be a man of an original genius) is a humdrum uninteresting creature: and his memory is not kept green like his whose name is enshrined in a "Punishment Book." Doubtless there was much idleness, and much time was wasted on employments which we should not consider academic in the proper sense. But many of the failings of our predecessors may be palliated or at least explained: the faults were often those of the period: and the Fellow represented, more often than he does in our more careful age, the "mean sensual man" of the day. Something, no doubt, can be said for close territorial elections: and some modern reformers, satiated perhaps with the Victorian cult of intellectual dexterity, have wished to return to them: but they are not compatible with a high average of talent. The whole system was to blame, —a system especially difficult to alter because based on the literal interpretation of statutes, yet harmful because the statutes were meant to fit a

different state of society,—under which Colleges without any violation of the letter of the law elected persons who were often not particularly well qualified for collegiate life and collegiate duties: and then opened wide the doors of dalliance by making it difficult for the Fellow to find adequate employment in Oxford while forbidding him on pain of losing his means of support to seek it elsewhere. Those who remained in Oxford and did not succumb to the temptations of idleness are the more praiseworthy: and of such there were not a few.

Apart from the Heads of Houses—who were quite as distinguished, in and outside Oxford, in the eighteenth as in the nineteenth century, the roll of Fellows of Oxford Colleges who were eminent in their respective spheres at this period is not indeed a very long one: but quality may to a certain extent atone for lack of quantity. In a sketch of this kind one can only refer to Fellows who produced at least some of their work at Oxford, and of whom the Fellowship system may be considered to be so far justified: but the system which is associated with the names of the Wesleys and Blackstone may at least claim to have made its mark on the intellectual history of England. John Wesley was elected to a territorial Fellowship at Lincoln in 1726, and held a tutorship there from 1729 to 1735: Charles being then a Student and Tutor at Christ Church. Blackstone, a Pembroke man, was elected

Fellow of All Souls' in 1743: his *Commentaries on the Laws of England* are republished from the Lectures on English Law which he delivered in that College. The lecturer's demeanour did not please Bentham, who heard him: he was "cold, precise and wary, exhibiting a frigid pride": but these faults do not seem to have interfered with the fame of the *Commentaries*. Blackstone may be claimed as a true son of Oxford, for he was a man of many academic activities, and has left his mark on the University in more ways than one: he is known as a reformer of the Clarendon Press, and as Michel Fellow of Queen's he was largely responsible for the restoration of the new buildings fronting the High Street—that "*recht königliches Gebäude*," as Zachary Uffenbach calls it. John Mill, the Greek Testament critic and correspondent of Bentley, was Principal of St. Edmund Hall at the end of the seventeenth century. Lowth, Professor of Poetry and lecturer on Isaiah, and Spence of the *Anecdotes*, were Fellows of New College,—for the most part non-resident: Spence was Professor of Poetry too, and afterwards of Modern History: "a man," says Dr. Johnson, "whose learning was not very great and whose mind was not very powerful," yet according to one of his friends "a complete scholar." It is perhaps significant that one finds the distinguished figures of the age among its Poetry Professors. Such were the Wartons, father and son: the father, a Magdalen man,

produced nothing considerable; the son, a Fellow of Trinity from 1752 to 1790, and perhaps the show resident Fellow of his time, was a far more notable personage,—poet, humorist, and scholar, the friend of Johnson, the editor of Theocritus, and the historian of English Poetry. Towards the end of his life he was Camden Professor of Ancient History and Poet Laureate,—a combination characteristic of the days when "elegance" was a necessary adjunct to learning. Addison was Fellow of Magdalen from 1697 to 1711: and although Oxford cannot claim to have been his home while he was writing in the *Spectator*, he was still a Fellow when he wrote his *Travels*, which Hearne calls a Book very trite, being made up of nothing but scraps of verses and things which have been observed over and over. Addison as a Whig could not expect warm commendation from the Tory sub-librarian. But the Addisonian *belles lettres* represent the fine flower of the kind of excellence which was aimed at by the "wits" among Oxford Fellows of the time. Such accomplishments make the representative Fellows of the period. What public opinion admired was rather elegance in literature, than diligent research and profound erudition. There were many tasteful scholars and some industrious editors: "if Oxford," says Mr. Wordsworth, "was behind hand in developing her educational system as a University, she was none the less most productive of individual literary enterprise"—more so, that is, than Cam-



THOMAS WARTON

FROM AN ENGRAVING AFTER THE PAINTING BY SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

bridge. One reads in the pages of Hearne of many Tories who have increased learning, and Whigs who think they have. Whig and Tory alike, they have gone for the most part into the limbo of the upper shelves of College libraries, where all things are forgotten: and the learning of Germany reigns in their stead.

V

COLLEGE LIFE

ABOUT, or shortly before, 1700, satire and description generally begin to differentiate between "Men" and "Dons": and the world becomes interested in them as separate classes, not as collectively "scholars." Few care very much to hear about the life of schoolmasters and schoolboys: and "in earlier times," says Mr. Wordsworth, "the relation between tutor and pupil at the Universities had been similar to that which has of late so happily grown up in higher schools between boy and master." "Boys," writes the same author, "when they arrived at Oxford or Cambridge in the sixteenth or seventeenth century, still found the birch at the buttery-hatch." But as the age of matriculation tended to increase, and the simpler common life (as of a school) began to make way for the social habits of a community whose members were theoretically old enough to follow each his respective bent,—the Don on the one hand and the Man on the other entered on their long career of providing "copy" for contemporary satirists or humorous

essayists: and the period abounded in such. Of the two, the Fellow is most before the public eye, and his social life and personal habits offer the fairest game to the satirist—who is less than kind to his foibles. At best, he is an ineffectual creature, —"one that puts on lined slippers and sits reasoning" (an unpractical and un-English occupation) "till the bell calls him to his meat." At worst, the uncharitableness of a somewhat gross and material age brands him as a rogue in grain, a Tartuffe, a vicious hypocritical pedant. If these condemnations are hardly justified by the facts of history, it is nevertheless impossible to deny that the College life of the early eighteenth century had its temptations. The resident Fellow of our own days is a humdrum figure, quite useless for purposes of satire,—at least such satire as would appeal to the non-academical public. It would be absurd to accuse him of lewdness and immorality, and even the newspaper press has dismissed the illusion that he is bibulous. He has no time or inclination for aping the extreme modes of fashion: the necessities of his profession (for he has a profession) and increased contact with the outer world have smoothed away his obvious eccentricities: he does not always even live in a College. But his predecessor of the reign of Queen Anne lived in surroundings which tended to develop a strongly marked individual type: for when Oxford was separated from London, as it was till later, by a

coach journey of two winter days' length, contact with the outer world cannot have done much to tone down peculiarities of local growth. He was doubly open to attack or ridicule. On the one hand, he was understood to be perpetuating the monastic and even ascetic conditions of College life: on the other, he was as a matter of fact a gentleman at large, amusing himself, within certain limitations, very much as he pleased. He could be chaffed by the outer world for being a collegian (and to live in a College is to be suspected of everything, especially by female satirists), and by collegians for mixing in external society and trying to copy its habits. Probably Fellows of the period were neither worse nor better than their contemporaries: they suffered from want of occupation, and a liberty to indulge their tastes which was apt to degenerate into licence. The Fellow was a gentleman of leisure waiting for a living. He might teach a little or read a little or play with a *magnum opus*. We cannot picture the rooms of the average Don thronged by earnest learners or the Bodleian crowded with serious students. A comfortable slackness prevailed.

The arrangement of an Oxford day did not, apparently, make for the strenuous life. Attendance at chapel, nominally obligatory, is the first incident: Dr. Prideaux' scheme of University reform places the chapel service at the intolerably early hour of six: but the rule of attendance does

not seem to have been universally rigorous. Breakfast in the early century was hardly a regular meal (a thing hardly credible to modern or recent Oxonians); most would begin the day with a glass of ale and a crust: persons who wished to be thought fashionable would drink coffee, then a rarity, and discuss the news of the day. Modern Frenchmen would be at home in the Oxford of Anne's day, so far as morning refection is concerned, —the early coffee succeeded by the *déjeuner* of the forenoon. For dinner normally began at 11: with the usual progressive tendency of that meal, it was postponed by some Colleges till 12 about 1720. Hearne writes in 1721: "Whereas the university disputations on Ash Wednesday should begin at 1 o'clock, they did not begin this year till *two* or after, which is owing to several colleges having altered their hours of dining from 11 to 12, occasioned from people's lying in bed longer than they used to do"—whereby we may conclude that the average man did not consider the hours before dinner as a serious part of the working day in 1720. A year later the diarist complains that at St. Edmund Hall dinner was at 12 and supper at 6, and no fritters: on which he comments that "when laudable old customs alter, 'tis a sign learning dwindles." Dr. Macray notes that in 1753 the Oxford dinner-hour was changed from 12 to 1. Dinner over, there were University exercises to attend, for those who wished: but one cannot

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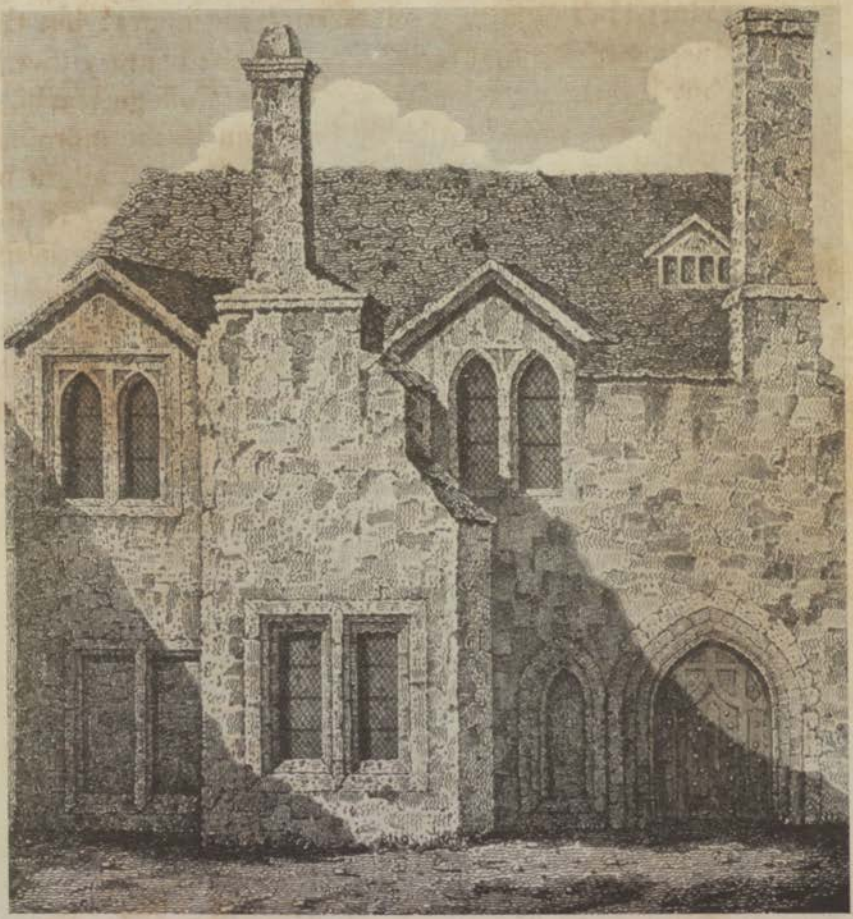
suppose that these were attractive to the general public. Perhaps the tuition of youth might occupy the earlier part of the afternoon: the Statutes of Hart Hall name 2 to 6 as studying hours: but the history of the first few decades of the century dwells but lightly on education. What College teaching there was would probably be given in the morning, before dinner, when both tutor and pupil might be supposed to be at their best and brightest. In the afternoon, there would be for the graduate various forms of leisure more or less learned: the student would return to his books: the Senior Fellow of the Christ Church Carmen Quadragesimale would take his regular number of turns in the College garden after the habitual quota of glasses of wine and pipes of tobacco. For most, the social life of the day began. In such Colleges as had common-rooms there were long séances over what Hearne calls Pipe and Pot; College business, succession to livings, and all the multifarious dull scandal of a University town, helped to drowse away hours of the afternoon: or politics aroused a keener interest, and toasts were drunk which, in the words of Mr. Gibbon, were not expressive of the most lively devotion to the House of Hanover.

"Return, ye days" (cries the beneficed ex-Fellow in Warton's *Progress of Discontent*),

> "when endless pleasure
> I found in reading or in leisure!



GREEK HALL

FROM AN ENGRAVING BY J. SKELTON

When calm around the Common Room
I puff'd my daily pipe's perfume!
Rode for a stomach, and inspected,
At annual bottlings, corks selected:
And dined untax'd, untroubled, under
The portrait of our pious Founder!"

But in the earliest years of the century not all Colleges had common-rooms. Baskerville notes towards the close of the seventeenth century that Queen's has recently made for itself a "common fireroom for ye graver people." (Shepilinda speaks of the Queen's common-room as particularly comfortable in 1738.) "Since this addition," he says, "of common firerooms in most Colleges the Seniors do retire after meals that the younger people may have freedom to warm their toes and fingers." Social meetings, especially of political partisans, were held in the numerous coffee-houses of the town, or such houses as "Antiquity Hall" or that bearing the sign of "Whittington and his Cat," the resort of Hearne and other "Honest" men. Sometimes a College would have its own particular house of call,—not all, one may hope, like the favourite haunt of the Fellows of Balliol at the end of the seventeenth century, "over against Balliol College, a dingy, horrid, scandalous ale-house, fit for none but draymen and tinkers. Here the Balliol men continually lie, and by perpetual bubbing add art to their natural stupidity to make themselves sots." Throughout the century extra-collegiate séances were more common than at

present. As late as 1782, Pastor Moritz, coming late at night into the "Mitre" inn, "saw a great number of clergymen, all with their gowns and bands on, sitting round a large table, each with his pot of beer before him." These reverend gentlemen sat all night over their beer, discussing theological and other topics; till "when morning drew near, Mr. M—— suddenly exclaimed, 'D—n me, I must read prayers this morning at All Souls'" —an expression which might have been somewhat surprising to a less charitable observer than Moritz. But the good Pastor, unlike the censorious Uffenbach, always tried to make allowances for the English point of view.

For others, there were the numerous "coffee-houses" which had rapidly become the fashion after "the coffy-drink" had first been introduced into England towards the end of the seventeenth century,—

> "Where the lewd spendthrift, falsely deemed polite,
> Oft damns the humble sons of vulgar Ale."

To drink coffee, whether in the early morning or afternoon, was apparently held by respectable conservatives to be a form of dissipation, a mere excuse for idleness and vain babbling; coffee-houses were associated with the tattle of politics and the great world, as common-rooms with College "shop." More dangerous attractions were offered by the shades of Merton Gardens and Magdalen Walks, much affected as a promenade

by the local beauties who aspired to figure as "Oxford Toasts." Contemporary rhyme is continually celebrating the names—of course classical according to eighteenth century rule—of these fair ones: Oxford aped the modes of the metropolis. There is a whole literature of the subject. The amorous enthusiasm of a poem entitled "Merton Walks: or the Oxford Beauties," provokes "Strephon's Revenge," a satire of more than Juvenalian acrimony. Both run to extremes. The encomiast of "Oxford Beauties" is in a mere rapture of eulogy:

> "Who has not heard of the *Idalian* Grove,
> Fit seat of Beauty, blissful Scene of Love?
> *Alcinous'* Gardens? or *Armida's* Bow'rs
> (Immortal Landskips, ever-blooming Flow'rs!)
> . . . . . .
> O! Merton! cou'd I sing in equal days,
> Not these alone shou'd boast *Eternal* Praise:
> Thy soft Recesses, and thy cool Retreats,
> Of Albion's brighter Nymphs the blissful seats,
> Like *Them* for ever green, for ever young,
> Shou'd bloom for ever in Poetick Song.
> Let Others, Foes to Love, by Day, by Night,
> With Toil drudge o'er the mighty *Stagyrite*:
> Skill'd in Debates plead better at the Bar,
> Or wage with nicer Acts the *Pulpit* War:
> In loftier Strains, and all the Pomp of Verse,
> Th' imagin'd Heroe's fancied Acts rehearse . . .
> Be *This*, my Muse, thy no less glorious Care,
> To sing Love's Joys, and celebrate the Fair!"

But blissful Scenes of Love, as "Strephon" points out in a ferocious satire, are not wholesome for a learned University. The youth who frequents

these soft recesses and cool retreats sooner or later

> "to vicious idle Courses takes,
> His *Logick-Studies* and his Pray'rs forsakes:
> Pufft up with Love, a studious Life he loaths,
> And places all his learning in his Cloaths:
> He *Smarts*, he Dances, at the Ball is seen,
> And struts about the Room with saucy Mein.
> In vain his Tutor, with a watchful Care,
> Rebukes his Folly, warns him to beware:
> In vain his Friends endeavour to controul
> The stubborn, fatal Byass of his Soul:
> In vain his Father with o'erflowing Eyes,
> And mingled Threatnings, begs him to be Wise:
> His Friends, his Tutors, and his Father fail,
> Nor Tears, nor Threats, nor Duty will prevail:
> His stronger Passions urge him to his Fall,
> And deaf to Counsel he contemns them all."

Balancing eulogy and satire, the candid reader is driven to the conclusion that Merton did well to close its garden: and must reluctantly acknowledge that Amanda and Lydia and Chloris, "Bright Goddesses" of languishing undergraduates and susceptible Dons, were for the most part the daughters of small local tradesmen or College servants—"of our Cobblers, Tinkers, Taylors," says the author of "Strephon's Revenge."

These early Fellows did not live in what we should call luxury. Their rooms, as represented in pictures, are severely plain, and their fare seems to have been simple. The meals at the St. John's high table, to judge from the menus preserved by the learned historian of that College, were plain enough. Dinners in Hall are considered by Uffen-

bach "disgusting." There are "ugly coarse tablecloths and square wooden plates." The Hall of St. John's "does not smell so bad as others." Persons of distinction (*die Vornehmen*) dine in their rooms: but this involves "unheard of expense."

One knows little about the social life of eighteenth century Dons: and most of what we do know is trivial or depressing. The thing is natural enough. Vice has its chronicles, virtue and respectability go unsung: it is not necessary to pass a sweeping condemnation on the pastimes and businesses of graduates in general because the latter were often futile and the former sometimes scandalous. There were good men in plenty: but it was the fault of the time that the average man, formed and guided, as always, by fashion and circumstance, was not saved from himself by rational academic occupations or even by the physical outlet of sports and games. Celibates by compulsion, herded together in Colleges with no necessary aptitude for a life of education or research, often, indeed, with no conception of a College except as an unavoidable step to preferment in the outer world, many graduates could naturally find nothing better to do than to make College history such as we know it—a tedious chronicle of quarrels, bickerings, and backbitings, wrangles about politics and College business. These things are written in the pages of Hearne.

Yet for many Fellows the period need not have

been exactly one of mere dulness. However little interesting to the non-academic world, the continual storms in teapots which raged in University circles —wranglings about discipline, statutes, national politics, whether bearing directly on Oxford or not —must have at least saved Hearne's contemporaries from lives of actual lethargy. The worst that can be said of the majority is that their activity was generally misdirected. Peace succeeded to the turbulent times of the early seventeen-hundreds: after 1750 the social life of senior members of Colleges became quieter and on the whole more respectable—certainly more modern. Men dined later (and probably as a consequence sat longer over their wine: after a three or four o'clock dinner the solid working-day might be considered as gone): and they wrangled less, as there was less to wrangle about. Things had settled down. The Jacobite cause was extinct. Victories or compromises had settled the basis of College government. Common-rooms were at peace within themselves—less rancorous, if more torpid. With no causes great or small to enlist his energies, the resident Fellow who did not care to teach lapsed into that sober, comfortable, gentlemanly leisure, which remained unbroken till the rude interference of Commissions a century later.

One need not be too pessimistic about their shortcomings. Many, no doubt, lived the kind of life which can be reconstructed from the day-book

of Mr. John Collins, preserved to us by the historian of Pembroke College. This gentleman, a Berkshire man and Fellow of Pembroke about 1780, gives the impression of having been in his youth a comfortable, easy-going, sporting parson, taking his full share of mild amusements, and probably not very seriously hampered by the education of youth or even his clerical duties (he had a curacy at Peasemore on the Berkshire downs before he retired from Pembroke to a living in Hertfordshire): the extracts from his account-book tell of losses at cards, shooting at Besilsleigh, snipe-shooting at Fairford, cricket; "subscription to y^e^ Society for y^e^ Propagation of Gospel, 10/6: Abingdon Races, 8/." For many such young Masters of Arts, their College would be an agreeable place enough, till a living should fall vacant. They did not organise movements or advance the cause of scholarship: yet they played a decorous enough part on the surprising stage of English society, and the age which made them what they were was apparently satisfied. Still it must be admitted that founders did not contemplate the Fellow of 1750–1850: nor can our later day altogether comprehend him. He himself would have been aghast at the reforms which turned the modern Fellow into a schoolmaster, and clothed him with Efficiency as with a garment. It is to a somewhat earlier period — about the middle of the eighteenth century—that Warton's

Journal of a Senior Fellow or Genuine Idler belongs.

"*Monday*, 9. Turned off my bedmaker for waking me at eight. Consulted my weather-glass. No hopes of a ride before dinner.

"10. After breakfast transcribed half a sermon from Dr. Hickman. *N.B.*—Never to transcribe any more from Calamy: Mrs. Pilcocks, at my Curacy, having one vol. of that author laying in her parlour-window.

"11. Went down into my cellar.

"1. Dined alone in my room on a sole. . . . Sat down to a pint of Madeira. Mr. H. surprised me over it. We finished two bottles of port together, and were very cheerful.

"6. Newspaper in the Common-room.

"7. Returned to my room, made a tiff of warm punch, and to bed before nine." . . .

After all, even a quarter of a century ago there were unoccupied resident Fellows.

But as the century advanced, if life was emptier for some, it was fuller for others. If the drones were sleepier, the working bees of the Collegiate hive were more active, in the legitimate sphere of teaching and College discipline. Of course this cannot be predicated of all Colleges. History continues to brand the indolent tutor. But such plain statements as Gibbon's admission that learning has been made

"a duty, a pleasure, and even a fashion" clearly point to improved ideals of activity among the governors of Colleges.

If the Fellow of 1700 suffered from lack of rational occupation, the curse of the undergraduate of that day seems to have been an excess of liberty,—liberty to which his age did not in general entitle him. As has been said, it is hard to dogmatise about age of matriculation: and in fact variety appears to have been the rule. Through most of the century, according to Dr. Macray's Register of Magdalen College, matriculation was commonest at sixteen or seventeen, but quite at the close there are instances of fourteen and even thirteen. "A precocious boy," says Wordsworth, "*could* enter at an age at which nowadays he would be not only discouraged, but practically inadmissible." Gibbon, as late as 1752, matriculated at fourteen: but the Vindicator of Magdalen College, while admitting that similar instances have occurred, blames "the imprudence of sending boys so hastily into the society of men." Even in 1806, Keble matriculated at fourteen. In or about 1700, a great many undergraduates must have been young boys: yet it is sufficiently clear from what is known of College life that the relations between tutor and pupil were no longer those of schoolmasters and schoolboys: and a tolerable proportion of students were old enough to be fair game for satire. This, indeed, has left no very

pleasing picture of undergraduate life. Anthony Wood's strictures on the licentious habits of his time have been already quoted. The rather lurid picture of academic manners which he draws accords only too well with the impression derived from a satire entitled "*Academia: or the Humours of the University of Oxford*, written by Mrs. Alicia D'Anvers about 1690. Feminine wits have not been invariably just to a University from which they are excluded, and the humour of the Revolution period runs to grossness: yet history does not contradict Mrs. D'Anvers: and on the whole it seems probable that her diary of an undergraduate's week is a fairly true picture of a typical Rake's Progress. According to this lady, the student is a creature of coarse vices and disreputable amusements, much left alone by his nominal pastors and masters, and living a kind of "Quartier Latin" existence. Common larceny does not come amiss to him: the hero and his friends go out on a poaching excursion, and steal countrywomen's hens and bacon. As for reading—

> "Folks can't do all at once, for look,
> They've more to do than con a book,"

and if Proctors occasionally interfere with such amusements as kissing Quakers' wives, or tutors demand to be "satisfied," there is always some easy way for "Mr. Snear" out of a temporary difficulty. One of his pretexts for idleness, it is

interesting to note, is the time-honoured plea of "People Up":

> "Some Country Stranger, or a Brother,
> Some Friend, Relation, or another,
> Being come to Town only to stare,
> Will be a week or Fortnight here:
> And he can do no less, than go
> Sometimes to wait on him, or so,
> Treat him, go with him up and down,
> At least, and show him all the Town:
> That he at home might tell a story
> O' th' Theatre and Laboratory.
> And ever when one Stranger's gone,
> Be sure they'll have another come:
> And then you know it would be evil,
> If they to Strangers be uncivil:
> And then sometimes their Father sends,
> Or else some other of their Friends,
> (They say,) a Letter of Attorney,
> Praying them to take a little Journey,"

evidently the excuse of Important Family Business is not of an age, but for all time. At a much later date (1727) Dr. Newton, the Principal of Hart Hall, protests against the habit of wasting time and money on entertaining strangers. If the Stranger wishes to see students' life, he should dine at the ordinary hall. If he only wants their conversation in private rooms, let him refresh himself in his Inn. It is monstrous (says Mr. Wordsworth, abridging Newton) to allow your time and money to be frittered away "in Absurd and Conceited Entertainments for every trifling Acquaintance, who has a mind to take Oxford and Blenheim on his way to the Bath. I say trifling Acquaintance:

for no Man living, that is well bred and understands what is proper, will ever Accept of an Entertainment at a Scholar's Chamber."

The most constant drawback to undergraduate happiness was, it appears, the ever present dun.

> "Thus, while my joyless minutes tedious flow,
> With looks demure, and silent pace, a Dun,
> Horrible monster! hated by gods and men,
> To my aerial citadel ascends:
> With hideous accents thrice he calls: I know
> The voice ill-boding, and the solemn sound.
> What should I do? or whither turn? amaz'd,
> Confounded, to the dark recess I fly
> Of wood-hole."

Thus the author of the "Splendid Shilling." Tradesmen with their little bills were not, as at present, excluded from Colleges: in the morning they thronged the staircases, and the prudent debtor would do well to keep his oak sported till the dinner-hour; after which, as we gather, he enjoyed the privilege of a close time.

> "Always when once 'tis afternoon
> Duns with the Colleges have done:
> And scholars, looking well about,
> With caution venture to go out."

Excessive supervision may, perhaps, be sometimes distasteful to the modern undergraduate: but at least it protects him from his tailor. In *Academia* the hero evades his enemies by the simple artifice of pretending to be some one else, and telling them that he himself is out. But if the danger could be avoided in Colleges, outside there were obviously

JOSEPH ADDISON

FROM AN ENGRAVING AFTER THE PAINTING BY G. KNELLER

greater risks to be faced: Mrs D'Anvers describes in detail how a Corpus Christi student, in order to visit Weaver's dancing-school in Holywell,—a favourite afternoon resort,—must perforce fetch a compass through St. Ebbe's and St. Thomas', lest by taking a direct route he should run the gauntlet among the outraged purveyors of his comforts.

The subject of this delectable satire has a room to himself—probably, if one may judge from contemporary or later art, bare and bleak enough when compared with the boudoir-like luxury of the modern student. Single tenancy was now becoming the custom. Till the Civil Wars, at any rate, senior members of Colleges had often, if not regularly, shared apartments with their juniors,—while the relation was still that of master and schoolboy; and although Fellows and undergraduates no longer thus lived together in 1700, joint undergraduate occupation was not extinct. Addison and Sacheverell—strange combination—were chamber-fellows, when Demies of Magdalen at the end of the seventeenth century. With the increasing age of undergraduates, and the development of more or less modern ideas of comfort, it became usual to allot separate rooms to each undergraduate—that is, if he was a scholar or commoner or gentleman-commoner. Not so with George Whitefield, who, when a servitor at Pembroke, "lay in the same room" with others: or with the luckless youth whose

academic existence is described in a companion picture of manners published some years after the appearance of *Academia*,—a descriptive piece in the metre and something of the manner of *Hudibras* according to the literary fashion of the time. According to this piece, which purports to represent the personal experiences of the writer, the "Servitour" lives in the most dismal and squalid surroundings. He has come up to the University like so many others in hope of "Preferment." His father ("an aspiring husbandman," says Mr. Wordsworth) hopes

> "If he can get Prevarment here
> Of Zeven or Eight Pounds a Year,
> To preach and Zell a Cup of Beer
> To help it out, he'll get good profit
> And make a pretty Bus'ness of it":

meantime this would-be parson-plus-publican supports life at the University with considerable difficulty. At dinner-time he does not scruple to steal odds and ends of dainties from the College Kitchen—

> "Poor Scraps, and cold, as I'm a Sinner,
> Being all that he can get for Dinner."

His room is "a Garret lofty," from which

> "he descends
> By Ladder, which dire Fate portends—"

(As late as 1790 "Servitor in College garret" will be only too glad to do gentlemen's impositions for them.)

"Once out of Curiosity
What Lodging th' had, I needs must see:
A Room with Dirt and Cobwebs lin'd,

Inhabited, let's see—by Four:
If I mistake not 'twas no more.

Their Dormerwindows with Brownpaper
Was patch'd to keep out Northern vapour.
The Tables broken Foot stood on,
An old *Schrevelius' Lexicon*
Here lay together, Authors various,
From *Homer's* Iliad, to *Cordelius.*
And so abus'd was *Aristotle*
He only serv'd to stop a Bottle."

The whole picture is intended to be repulsive. Yet after all, if the living be plain, it is something to find Homer and Aristotle noticeable parts of an Oxford scholar's possessions in 1709.

The now obsolete institution of servitorship has been used as one of the many sticks wherewith to beat the University. Looking back to the later uses and development of the system, critics have been inclined to condemn Oxford for deliberately drawing invidious distinctions between the status of rich and poor, who should be recognised as equally entitled to the privileges of a seat of learning. That mere poverty should be branded with a social stigma is of course a thing intolerable, and Colleges that perpetuated such a state of things deserved no doubt all the hard names (and these were many) that could be applied to them: still it should be remembered that the very unsatisfactory

relation to Collegiate life of nineteenth century servitors at Oxford or sizars at Cambridge was only a perversion of conditions which reflect nothing but credit on the Universities where they were admitted or established. Nothing could be more humane and liberal—more consonant with the ideal of a truly national University — than the original intention of the institution of servitorship, in so far as it designed to put University education within the reach not only of rich and poor, but—what is more difficult—of gentle and simple alike. "The truth is," writes the historian of Pembroke College most justly, "that servitorships and other gradations of rank at the University belong to an older and less sophisticated constitution of society. The medieval University drew the studious and aspiring of all ranks of life in vast numbers into its embracing commonwealth, each student retaining there the social condition which was his at home. There was no more degradation in service inside the University than outside it. . . . The servitors of a College corresponded to the lay brethren of a monastery. They were not poor gentlemen, but came from the plough and the shop." Boys of the lower classes were encouraged to seek at Oxford, often in the Colleges, employment of some such kind as they were accustomed to in their own homes, on the understanding that Colleges in return for services rendered gave them their education. While the relations between servitor and scholar or

commoner were those of master and man, social separation was quite natural and would not be felt to be invidious: it became odious when, as later happened, servitorships ceased to be held by sons of "aspiring husbandmen" and suchlike, and began to attract poor men of a rather higher social grade. These latter inherited the advantages and the disadvantages of their humble predecessors, and social deprivations which did no harm to the son of a labourer were naturally felt by poor gentlemen. Such, no doubt, servitors began to be early in the century. From various causes, it seems to have been realised that a University education was of no particular advantage, in the circumstances of the time, to the son of a "chimney sweeper and a poor gingerbread woman," like the gentleman's servitor at "Brazennose" College who appears as a character in Baker's "Act at Oxford" of 1704. His business is (I quote from Mr. Wordsworth) to wait upon Gentlemen-Commoners, to dress and clean their shoes and make their exercises: he is an acknowledged menial. But thirty years later "Mr. Shenstone" (as we learn from that gentleman's biographer, who publishes in 1788) "had one ingenious and much-valued friend in Oxford, Mr. Jago" (of University College) "his schoolfellow, whom he could only visit in private as he wore a servitor's gown: it being then deemed a great disparagement for a commoner to appear in public with one in that situation: which, by the way, would

make one wish, with Dr. Johnson, that there were no young people admitted, in that servile state, in a place of liberal education." This Mr. Jago, we are told, was the son of a clergyman in Warwickshire, with a large family. Here is the system with all the *invidia* which later attached to it, full blown already. About the same time George Whitefield was admitted a servitor at Pembroke: he had been a drawer at his father's inn at Gloucester, "and found," he says, "my having been used to a publick-house was now of service to me": so that many gentlemen chose him to be their servitor. Kennicott, the son of a baker, was a servitor at Wadham in 1744. Evidently we are dealing in these matters with a stage of transition. Drawers at inns are still admitted to servitorships: sons of clergymen have begun to seek these places.

Other times bring other manners for scholar and commoner as for servitor. Changes in the social state of England were at once reflected in the Universities: the yeoman class, from which these had largely drawn, was fast disappearing, some sinking to be peasants, some rising to be "gentlemen." This change differentiated rich and poor, and began to turn the Universities into finishing schools for the upper classes exclusively: and inevitably the habits of the undergraduate grew more "polite" than they had been when he was for the most part drawn from a class of small farmers. It was the misfortune—perhaps

the inevitable misfortune—of the eighteenth century that it left Oxford much less of a "national" University than it found her. According to the *Oxford Magazine* of 1769, the undergraduate of that day is a "gentleman," with a proper contempt for trade:

> "But when become a son of Isis,
> He justly all the world despises,
> Soon clearly taught to understand
> The dignity of gown and band,
> Nor would his gownship e'er degrade
> To walk with wealthiest son of trade."

This is a long way from Pope's family arrangement—

> "Boastful and rough, your first son is a squire,
> Your next a tradesman meek, and much a liar":

the age of the Equality of Man was also that of the differentiation of classes. Yet there were compensations for the University, in "politeness" of manners. Even thirty years from the appearance of *Academia* sensibly humanised the ways of the undergraduate: mere vulgar raffishness and rowdyism—an inheritance which the seventeenth century bequeathed to the early eighteenth—had had its day: the stringent discipline enforced by some College authorities during the reigns of Anne and George I. had purged away some of the grosser forms of misbehaviour, and the fashionable social life of London helped to divert youthful extravagances into the harmless paths of mere foppishness. Oxford, like London, had its wits and beaux, its little ostentations of elegance in

dress and manner, and its social satire in verse or prose recalling the manner of *Tatler* or *Spectator*, —such as *Terræ Filius*' essay on the University "Smart" in 1726: "Mr. Frippery . . . is a Smart of the first rank, and is one of those who come, in their academical undress, every morning between ten and eleven to Lyne's coffee-house: after which he takes a turn or two upon the Park, or under Merton Wall, while the dull regulars are at dinner in their hall, according to statute: about one he dines alone in his chamber upon a boiled chicken, or some pettitoes: after which he allows himself an hour at least to dress in, to make his afternoon appearance at Lyne's: from whence he adjourns to Hamilton's about five: from whence (after strutting about the room for a while, and drinking a dram of citron) he goes to chapel, to shew how garterly he dresses, and how well he can chaunt. After prayers he drinks Tea with some celebrated toast, and then waits upon her to Maudlin Grove, or Paradise Garden, and back again." (It is recorded in *Oxoniana* that the back door to Merton College Garden was shut up in 1717, on account of its being too much frequented by young scholars and ladies on Sunday nights.) "He seldom eats any supper, and never reads anything but novels and romances." This is not a day of desperate viciousness. Indeed there would be no very great harm about the Smart, were it not that he dresses beyond his means: for he is not always a nobleman or a

MERTON

FROM AN ENGRAVING BY J. SKELTON, AFTER THE DRAWING BY J. MALCHAIR

gentleman-commoner: his "stiff silk gown which rustles in the wind," his "flaxen tie-wig, or sometimes a long natural one, which reaches down below his rump," his "broad bully-cock'd hat, or a square cap of above twice the usual size"—these gauds, alas! and the *crurum non enarrabile tegmen*, are too often unpaid for. "I have observed," says *Terræ Filius*, "a great many of these transitory foplings, who came to the university with their fathers (rusty, old country farmers) in linsey-wolsey coats, greasy sunburnt heads of hair, clouted shoes, yarn stockings, flapping hats, with silver hat-bands, and long muslin neckcloths run with red at the bottom. A month or two afterwards I have met them with bob-wigs and new shoes, Oxford-cut: a month or two more after this, they appear'd in drugget cloaths and worsted stockings: then in tye-wigs and ruffles: and then in silk gowns: till by degrees they were metamorphosed into compleat Smarts, and damn'd the old country putts, their fathers, with twenty foppish airs and gesticulations." And in later life "the polite Mr. Dobson of New College"—who while at Oxford had "a delicate jaunt in his gait, and smelt very philosophically of essence"—turns into a divine, "walking with demure looks and a holy leer": "so easy is the transition from the bowling-green to the pulpit!" Such metamorphoses are not of one period, nor are they necessary signs of a decay of manners. Young Oxford of 1730 or so had begun to take much

thought for its personal appearance. Reformers like Dr. Newton condemned fine clothes: "finery," says the Principal, "in an University, amongst scholars, in a scholar, and while he is professedly in pursuit of those improvements which adorn the mind, is, even in a person of fortune, an impropriety, if not an absurdity." Such admonitions were as effective as they generally are. Fashion, more licentious than in our soberer age, prided itself on gay colours: and even towards the end of the century George Colman the younger was matriculated before the Vice-Chancellor "in a grass-green coat."

The historian of wigs may find instruction in the chronicles of Universities: for the wig in its various forms was an important part of the toilet, perhaps in Oxford even more than elsewhere. "Ramillies" wigs, later called "tye-wigs" (it will be remembered that Addison was described as "a parson in a tye-wig"), were the characteristic head-gear that stamped the man-about-town at least in the early part of the century: we have seen that the "Smart" wears one. Shenstone's biographer records that "according to the unnatural taste which then (1732) prevailed, every schoolboy, as soon as he was entertained at the university, cut off his hair, whatever it was: and, without any regard to his complexion, put on a wig, black, white, brown, or grizzle, as 'lawless fancy' suggested. This fashion, no consideration could at that time have induced Mr. Shenstone to comply

with. He wore his hair, however, almost in the graceful manner which has since generally prevailed" (this is written in 1788): "but as his person was rather large for so young a man, and his hair coarse, it often exposed him to the ill-natured remarks of people who had not half his sense"—but who no doubt criticised Mr. Shenstone with that freedom from which an unwieldy person and a careless coiffure has seldom been exempt in Universities. Apparently the natural progression was from a "Bobwig," worn by undergraduates, to the "Grizzle" which decked maturer age, and was far more ample and generally imposing. One of the poets of the *Oxford Sausage*, writing about 1760, deplores the necessity of discarding his "Bob" in an "Ode to a Grizzle Wig," a formidable headgear which his scout in the accompanying illustration is just presenting to him:

"All hail, ye Curls, that rang'd in reverend row,
With snowy pomp my conscious shoulders hide!
That fall beneath in venerable flow,
And crown my brows above with feathery pride!

. . . . . .

"But thou, farewell, my Bob! whose thin-wove thatch
Was stor'd with quips and cranks and wanton wiles,
That love to live within the one-curl'd Scratch,
With Fun, and all the family of Smiles":

but about 1760, too, Bentham's hair "was turned up in the shape of a kidney," this shape being, according to his biographer, prescribed by the Statutes, presumably for no other purpose than to cause "grievous annoyance." Under the circum-

stances barbers were very important functionaries, as the wig, and later the hair, had to be combed, curled, and powdered. It is said that W. S. Landor, whom Southey remembered as a "mad Jacobin," was the first undergraduate who wore his hair without powder. "The barber's was the only trade," says Mr. Wordsworth, "which might be followed by matriculated persons." The attentions of

"Highland barber, far-famed Duff,"

are a necessary preliminary to dinner towards the end of the century. The advertiser in the *Oxford Journal* for 1762 who wants "a sober man-servant," adds, "If he can dress a wig the more agreeable."

Probably the Smart is a fair enough picture, allowance being made for the business of a satirist. It is at least not contradicted by a contemporary diary which has been preserved to us by the historian of Pembroke College. The diarist has serious intellectual tastes: but granting that satire would naturally ignore these, he is a person of whom Amherst's portrait might be a very tolerable caricature. He was Mr. Erasmus Philipps, of a very well-known Welsh family: a Fellow Commoner who, to judge from his diary, had a country gentleman's natural interest in sport, but was able also to find distractions in literature and the society of the learned: very far from being a mere Bob Acres. Thus some of the earliest entries in his record relate to races on Port Meadow: two days afterwards "I

was made free of the Bodleian Library," to which next day Mr. Philipps presents a Malabar Grammar, a very great curiosity: at the same time presenting "Pembroke College Library with Mr. Prior's Works in Folio, neatly bound, which cost me £1, 3s." In July of the next year "Went to the Tuns with Tho. Beale, Esq. (Gent. Commoner), Mr. Hume, and Mr. Sylvester, Pembrokians, where Motto'd Epigrammatiz'd, etc."—like any "Wits" of the day at a London coffee-house. About the same time the writer "sent Mr. Wm. Wightwick, Demy of Magdalene College, a copy of Verses on his leaving Pembroke": and in the same month "Mr. Solomon Negri (a Native of Damascus), a great critic in the Arabick Language and perfect Master of the French and Italian Tongues, came to Oxford, to consult and transcribe some Arabick Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library: fell acquainted with this Gent, and with Mr. Hill, an ingenious friend of his that came down with him: and enjoy'd abundance of satisfaction in their conversation." Evidently this young man was no mere butterfly of fashion. If he goes "a Fox-hunting" with various persons of quality, and joins his friends in "making a Private Ball" for some Oxford ladies, we also find him "at Mr. Tristram's Chambers with Mr. Wanley, the famous Antiquarian, Keeper of the Harleian Library, Mr. Bowles, Keeper of the Bodleian Library, and Mr. Hunt of Hart Hall, who is skill'd in Arabick": or he records how he "went with Mr.

Tristram to the Poetical Club (whereof he is a member) at the Tuns (kept by Mr. Broadgate), where met Dr. Evans, Fellow of St. John's, and Mr. Jno. Jones, Fellow of Baliol, Member of the Club. . . . Drank Gallicia Wine, and was entertained with two Fables of the Doctor's Composition, which were indeed masterly in their kind: But the Dr. is allowed to have a peculiar knack, and to excell all Mankind at a Fable." Later, "went to Portmead, where Lord Tracey's Mare *Whimsey* (the Swiftest Galloper in England) ran against Mr. Garrard's *Smock-faced Molly*, and won the Size Money (a purse of forty guineas) with all the facility imaginable. She gallops, indeed, at an incredible rate, and has true mettle to carry it on. Upon this occasion I co'ld not help thinking of Job's description of the Horse, and particularly of that expression in it, *He swalloweth the ground*, which is an Expression for Prodigious Swiftness in use among the Arabians, Job's Countrymen, at this day. . . . Went to the races at Bicester. This place is also call'd Burcester, perhaps, as much as to say *Birini Castrum.*" It does not appear that Mr. Philipps was seriously incommoded by tutors and lecturers: perhaps there were not many to trouble him; or as a Fellow commoner he may have been specially privileged. He was no serious student: yet not a Philistine, but a cultured dilettante who could dabble in *belles lettres* and Oriental languages and British antiquities,—the favourite pursuits of

the learned in the Oxford of that day. One never can tell—but I am afraid that not very many present-day Oxonians who ride with "The Bicester" meditate on *Birini Castrum.* Their antiquarian tastes are directed into other and more severely practical channels.

Fellow commoners like Mr. Philipps had not yet become a serious embarrassment to College disciplinarians. They would be still for the most part drawn from the country gentlemen, a class keen enough about open-air sports but not very much given to lavish ostentation and expensive living: and would be on the whole, it is probable, orderly members of Collegiate society where some of their Dons had a good deal in common with them. Inconveniences arose later when the sons of *nouveaux riches* came up to the University with the express purpose of "cutting a dash," and showing that if their fathers could make money, they could spend it.

Some thirty years after *Terræ Filius'* picture of the Smart, the "Lounger's" diary (in the *Oxford Sausage*) is very much on the same lines: except that in 1760, wine, rather than the society of the fair, seems to be the attraction. The Lounger "topes all night and trifles all day": compulsory lectures are far from him, as from the Smart. He breakfasts at ten, and after that meal feels strong enough to blow a tune on the flute,—an offence for which Apollo flayed Marsyas, and a modern musician

would probably be severely reprimanded by his Dean. After this he chats with a friend or reads a play till dinner: which is followed by a visit to "Tom's" or "James'" coffee-house.

> "From the coffee-house then I to Tennis away,
> And at five I post back to my College to pray:
> I sup before eight, and secure from all duns,
> Undauntedly march to the *Mitre* or *Tuns*:
> Where in Punch or good claret my sorrows I drown,
> And toss off a bowl 'To the best in the town':
> At one in the morning, I call what's to pay,
> Then home to my College I stagger away."

Breakfast is by this time a regular event in the day. In the early part of the century it was regarded rather as a mischievous and time-wasting innovation: and certainly the "Jentacular Confabulations" stigmatised by Dr. Newton of Hart Hall, must have been a serious impediment to the morning's work, in the days when dinner was at noon or earlier. Even in 1732 Pembroke men breakfasted and sat long over the meal. In 1733, Richard Congreve of Christ Church breakfasted on tea—by preference, "that which is made of herbs, such as sage, balm, colesfoot, and the like." Mr. Graves, Shenstone's biographer, accepted an invitation to breakfast with the poet at his chambers, "which, according to the sociable disposition of most young people, was protracted to a late hour."

Smarts and Loungers no doubt lived idly, and probably life was becoming more comfortable and comparatively luxurious: though to modern eyes

their surroundings represent, if contemporary art can be trusted, the extreme of discomfort. Christ Church in 1780 "was so completely crammed that shelving garrets and even unwholesome cellars" were inhabited by well-to-do undergraduates. But more than fifty years before this the incoming Vice-Chancellor urged the magistrates of the University to check luxury: whereas it is well known (says Hearne) that there are no greater Epicureans than Heads of Houses. At any rate it cannot be said that University life entailed, certainly till late in the century, much necessary expense. Richard Congreve could live at Christ Church for £60. "A small specimen," he says, "of some of our settled expenses I'll give you:

"Rooms	£8	8	0
Tutor	8	8	0
Commons and Battlings	20	0	0
Laundress	2	0	0
Bedmaker	1	12	0
Coals and Candles	3	10	0"

Towards 1750 the increase of luxury alarmed Dr. Newton: according to his Statutes for Hart Hall room rent was never to be more than £6 yearly, and no Scholar's weekly "Battels" to exceed 4s. 6d.: it is true that Dr. Newton's ideal fare for a Scholar was apple-dumplings and small beer,—an excess of simplicity against which Amherst justly protests in *Terræ Filius*. But about the same time "Battels" at St. John's rarely exceeded £8 a

term. Ten years later £80 a year was said to be enough for a commoner of Balliol, though a gentleman-commoner of that College might spend £200. Even an annual £80, considering the change in the value of money, represents a substantial income: and no doubt towards the end of the century, with the growing exclusiveness of the University, ideals of expenditure would change, and College charges probably become higher. In 1771, according to a writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, "a complaint is daily made that the admissions into our Colleges are much fewer than they formerly were. This diminution is attributed partly to the perhaps unavoidable increase of the expense of an Academical Education." The later period introduced various changes—indeed, a different atmosphere.

But the habits of the Smart and even of the Lounger do not seem to have been really typical of the student life of the later years of the eighteenth century. Times and manners were changing: greater strictness, better government, less individualism, a different and on the whole a healthier public opinion prevailed: social life tended to centralise itself within the walls of colleges. We hear much less of the dubious attractions of Merton Walks and Magdalen Grove and Paradise Garden: much less of revelry in "Pot-house snug," or "Splendid Tavern," or such fashionable spots as the

"coffee-house
Of James or Juggins, where the grateful breath
Of loath'd tobacco ne'er diffus'd its balm."

Reminiscences which refer to a later date than 1760 or thereabouts are rather of College life in the exact sense. Such is the diary of a Trinity man who matriculated perhaps in 1790. *Ipse dies pulchro distinguitur ordine rerum.* Chapel, breakfast at half-past eight, reading or lectures from half-past nine to one: an hour and three-quarters for air and exercise: dressing for dinner at a quarter to three, and then at three the central event of the day—dinner-time having by this time advanced just four hours (at what is apparently its normal rate of progression) since the beginning of the eighteenth, as it changed from three to seven in the nineteenth century. After the meal comes a classical recitation:

"'Tis then before concluding grace
Some gownsman rising from his place,
While servants bustle out,
Towards the Griffin walking slow
To fellows makes initial bow
And then begins to spout.

"Μηνιν αειδε θεα then
Or verses from the Mantuan pen
Sound in melodious strains,
Or lines from Milton's Paradise
With emphasis deliver'd nice
A just applause obtains."

After dinner, the day is considered over, and the remaining hours may be spent in social festivity.

Men meet in College for "wines," cut the five o'clock chapel, and are royally drunk by six. About nine the scout appears with a substantial supper, but none of the party being in a condition to eat it, he earns this very ample perquisite by helping the revellers across the quadrangle to their respective beds. This kind of orgie, the diarist is careful to point out, is not of daily occurrence:

> "Yet, my friend Will, you don't suppose
> That thus alike all evenings close
> And gownsmen all are such?
> No, no! believe me, now and then
> They will exceed like other men,
> So did the grave phiz'd Dutch,"

and to get as excessively drunk as Mynheer van Dunck was a social peccadillo easily condoned in the later years of the eighteenth century. Whether in this respect the University along with the rest of England had deteriorated, and society was soberer under Anne than under George III., it is hard to say: Hearne in the early century abounds with notices of hard-drinking Fellows. But it is easy enough to see that, granting the absence of public feeling against drunkenness, there was much in Oxford to encourage it. For one thing, there was more money to spend. One of the features of the century is the disappearance of the small squirearchy,—the "old rusty farmers" whom *Terræ Filius* used to see bringing their clownish sons up to the University in 1720: and the accompanying more definite demarcation of an

upper and lower class—a separation which is perhaps our most regrettable inheritance from the Georgian age—helped to "denationalise" Oxford, and practically turn Alma Mater into a University for "gentlemen"—at least, for the richer and socially higher: as indeed she remained for the first four decades of the nineteenth century. It will be seen later that one of the charges against the expelled Methodists in 1768 was that they had followed humble callings and were not fit to associate with gentlemen,—an argument which carried weight then, but certainly would not have been used fifty years earlier. Growing wealth, then, was partly to blame: and the lack of incentives to any kind of exertion is some explanation of tippling, if no excuse. Nor must it be forgotten that, as the Trinity diarist points out, the afternoon and evening were not invariably spent in bacchanalian orgies. There were other and humaner occupations: apparently not, in the Trinity of that day, reading: but *soirées musicales* were customary:

> "Then Crotch and two musicians more
> And amateurs near half a score
> To play in concert meet.
> Our chairs to Warren's rooms we move
> And those who strains melodious love
> Enjoy a real treat."

Crotch, who

> "As director of the band
> On harpsichord with rapid hand
> Sweeps the full chord,"

cannot at the time (about 1791) have been more than fifteen: he was Professor of Music six years later. Music has not invariably flourished at Oxford: but at least it may be said that the University has not been unkind to the *ars musica*. In fact in 1733, Hearne, a conservative and no friend to Germans, or indeed any foreigners (he had the true Tory spirit), deplores an over-indulgence to foreign musicians: "one Handel, a foreigner," having been allowed the use of the Theatre by the Vice-Chancellor, "who is much blamed for it." Handel and his musicians appear to have performed five times in the Theatre during July of 1733 ("N.B."—Hearne writes, "His book —not worth 1d. he sells for 1s."): while Mr. Powel the Superior Bedel of Divinity sang with them all alone,—a thing not easy to realise.

"When Mr. Fosset strikes the strings"—

thus Shepilinda, of what she calls a "Consort"—

"He does us all inspire,
But more when Mr. Powel sings
In concert with his lyre."

But in spite of Hearne's discontent, "about the middle of the century," Mr. Wordsworth writes, "music had taken some root in the Universities": and according to the author of the *Academic* in 1750 "a Taste for Musick, modern Languages, and other the polite Entertainments of the Gentlemen, have succeeded to Clubs and Bacchanalian Routs." This is a little too optimistic: drinking was not

on the decrease: yet at least conviviality was tempered by the ingenuous arts. The *Oxford Journal* for 1763 advertises concerts of vocal and instrumental music every Monday except in August and September: and an oratorio once a term.

It is inevitable that history should lay disproportionate stress on occupations not in themselves strictly academic, such as playing the harpsichord, or getting drunk. But the comparative silence of chroniclers should not blind students of history to the fact that there were reading men and even reading sets: although tutors might be slack and examinations practically non-existent as tests of ability or industry, classical literature possessed much of the charm of novelty: and even though the divine love of learning might be absent, yet many a poor and ambitious youth would find an adequate incentive to study in the desire to stand well with the authorities of his College, as offering the most obvious and perhaps the only road to preferment. Twenty years before Gibbon found the University given over to idleness, Richard Graves, on his first arrival at Pembroke, "was invited, by a very worthy person now living, to a very sober little party, who amused themselves in the evening with reading Greek and drinking water." It is true that he was seduced from these irreproachable recreations first into the society of a "set of jolly, sprightly young fellows,"

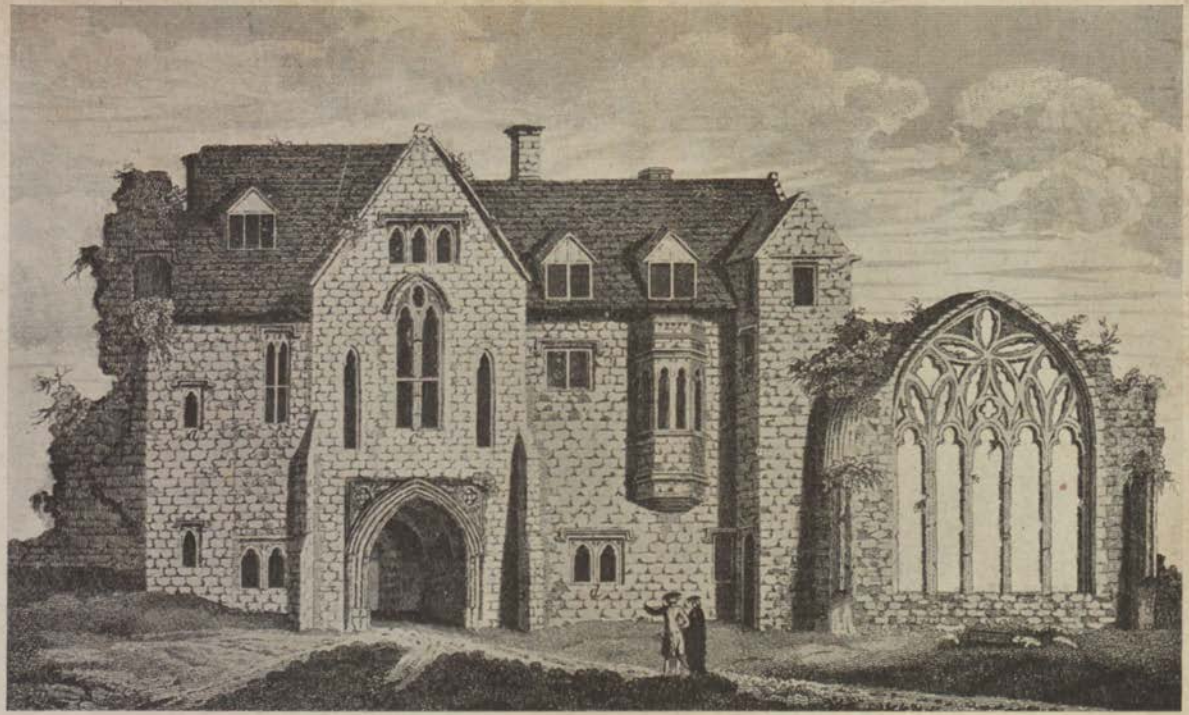
who "sung bacchanalian catches the whole evening": and next into an equally reprehensible if more elegant company of gentlemen-commoners, who treated him with port-wine, arrack-punch, and claret,—and were, in short, "what were then called 'bucks of the first head.'"

No such irregularities marred the career of Mr. James of Queen's College, that virtuous man and serious student. The intellectual condition of his College was indeed not such as to satisfy the aspirations of a studious and ambitious reading-man. Young James and his correspondents and relations are very severe upon "the farce of discipline and the freezing indifference" of that society: the "lethargy of a cloister," and the miserable condition of Fellows who (under the liberal pretence of educating youth) spend half their lives in smoking tobacco and reading the newspapers, and at their best can only be described as "Academic Baviuses." Certainly it appears that the Queen's of that day was hardly animated by a progressive spirit of enlightenment. Nevertheless it had its uses (in James' eyes) as a place of "good and wholesome probation"; and at least—except that the midday hours from eleven to one must be given to the study of logic—there was no actual obstacle to reading. A studious man of those days would begin to read at nine, and after logic and a one-o'clock dinner could give the afternoon to the classics and a constitutional walk: "now and

then," says the exemplary James, "after supper, I sit with my friends, and seldom walk out without company" (*μετὰ σώφρονος ἡλικιώτου*), "and, as our conversation is either literary or, at least, innocent and entertaining, I hope to receive benefit from it." Altogether a quiet and industrious foundationer could find congenial society and even a considerable stimulus to exertion in the Oxford of 1780: "College," says one of James' friends, "is a happy place for reading." After all, the eighteenth century was no bad time for the "serious student," who, under its *laisser faire* conditions, was comparatively free from obligations which a more strenuous age has imposed upon him: and perhaps the verdict of future centuries may condemn a system like our own, under which Mr. Lemprière of Pembroke would certainly have found it difficult to begin the compilation of his Classical Dictionary while still an undergraduate. For James, if tutors and lecturers were less helpful than they might be, there were already a few academic prizes open to competition. The first Craven Scholarship was awarded in 1726: the record of the Chancellor's Latin Verse and English Essay Prizes begins in 1768: and the first Newdigate prize was awarded in the same year, for a poem on the Conquest of Quebec. It is interesting to hear that a "prodigious number" of men entered for the Latin Verse prize of 1779 —the subject being Electricity: and "wagers are laid that it will fall to Christ Church. I confess,"

says James, "that they bid fairer than any other single College, from their superiour number of verse-writers." James, indeed, was anxious to be admitted a member of the Christ Church foundation, in the hope of finding there a more sympathetic atmosphere among the young gentlemen for whom learning was a Duty, a Pleasure, and even a Fashion: but Dr. Browne, then a Canon, from whom much was hoped, proved but a broken reed: and in fact "really has had the meanness and the folly to inquire of the Provost and Fellows of Queen's into the young man's character." One is sure that Dr. Browne could never have heard anything to the young man's disadvantage even from Academic Baviuses: but, for whatever reason, the doors of Christ Church were closed. James finished his career at Queen's with great credit.

There was a good deal of actual study: and the brain of Oxford was developing in other directions. Signs of a general intellectual awakening began to show themselves; witness such a scheme as that of T. F. Dibdin and his friends, who, dissatisfied with the general "somnolency" of the University, proposed to found a society to be called a "Society for Scientific and Literary Disquisition." We have heard of such since: but in 1795 the novelty of the scheme was calculated to alarm the prudent. The promoters, wishing to hold their meetings in a hired house under official sanction, applied to the Vice-Chancellor for his permission. But academic



QUEEN'S HALL

FROM AN ENGRAVING BY J. SKELTON

authority, alarmed by the excesses of the French Revolution, seldom erred in the direction of rash concession: and discussion was officially labelled dangerous. Dr. Wills, after a week's consideration of the rules and regulations framed for the proposed club, addressed a deputation which waited on him in the following highly characteristic language: "Gentlemen, there does not appear to be anything in these laws subversive of academic discipline, or contrary to the statutes of the University—but as it is impossible to predict how they may operate, and as innovations of this sort, and in these times, may have a tendency which may be as little anticipated as it may be distressing to the framers of such laws, I am compelled, in the exercise of my magisterial authority, as vice-chancellor, to interdict your meeting in the manner proposed." If, as Dibdin supposes, the tone of this answer was dictated by so enlightened a Head as the great Cyril Jackson himself, it is a very striking indication of the temper of the time. The club was eventually formed, but as a private and unrecognised society, meeting in College rooms: Edward Copleston, subsequently Provost of Oriel and Bishop of Llandaff, was one of its earliest members. It had some reputation in its day. Dibdin is probably justified in claiming that the liberalised spirit which reformed the examination statutes at the beginning of the nineteenth century was in great measure fostered by the "Lunatics,"—as they were nick-

named, and indeed themselves preferred to be called.

Here, at least, is a sign of awakening intelligence: and the undoubted fact is that one can recognise a vast improvement in tone and atmosphere as the end of the century draws near. In spite of a good deal of torpor, and a good deal of militant conservatism, Oxford in general could not but feel the social civilisation of the time, and necessarily bear her part in the improvement: a fact for which her tutors deserve at least some credit. Colleges were no longer mere lodging-houses for ill-behaved, overgrown schoolboys, but centres in many cases of intellectual life, rational enjoyment, and cheerful companionship. It was even possible to record a sentimental affection for the University as a place of agreeable studies and friendships and harmless pleasures: one notes a growing realisation of the charm of the *genius loci*—the charm which captivates most who are worth the captivating. Anthony Wood had felt that: but with the coming of the next generation Oxford had entered into the prison-house of a gross material "reasonableness." Dibdin, writing of course many years afterwards, puts on record the impression which Oxford had made on him and on others of his day. One hopes that there were many whose minds were open to the legitimate pleasures of the place,—the new-born spirit of independence, the youthful friendships, the visits to "the ruins of Godstow or the sacred

antiquity of Iffley" (no longer "Gothic and barbarous"),—the sense that "the future had nothing then so entirely rapturous as the present." The eighteenth century must have had these enthusiasms: but the formalism of the age hampered their expression, or, at least, made it appear artificial.

The lack of organised amusements would make an "early Georgian" afternoon a very uninteresting affair to modern undergraduates. There were no crews practising on the river, and no regular games to take part in or to watch. Fives, and of course tennis, are ancient sports: Loggan's *Oxonia Illustrata* shows a game of fives going on at Merton in 1675. Ninety years later the "Lounger" wastes his time in the tennis-court. About the same time the witty Dr. Warton classes tennis-courts among the Schools of this University "where exercise is regularly performed both morning and afternoon": while on Billiard Tables "the laws of motion are exemplified." But if the attitude of Oxford rulers to the game of kings resembled that of their Cambridge brethren, who in or about 1720 compelled certain undergraduates to make a public recantation for having indulged in what was regarded as a vicious and degrading pastime, athletics in general can hardly be said to have been encouraged: even battledore and shuttlecock was discouraged by Jeremy Bentham's tutor, Mr. Jefferson: who interrupted the philosopher's pastime "solely to stop any pleasureable excitement"—such

can be the malignity of Dons. If one is ever moved to murmur at the tyranny of modern games and sports, we should remember that there is always a tendency to abuse supremacies which have been won with toil and difficulty. Football did not affect eighteenth century academic life. But authority looked with grave suspicion on the beginnings of cricket, which appears towards the end of the century as a diversion of the idle rich, *ἄγαλμα τῆς πολυχρύσου χλιδῆς*: and the Oxonian dignitaries of so late a period as the earlier decades of the nineteenth century looked askance even on the virtuous oarsman,—a person who is now regarded as strengthening the moral (and perhaps even the intellectual) stamina of his University. But the storm and stress of these violent sports must have been of itself foreign to young gentlemen who wore laced coats and periwigs. Again we are in a transitional period: most Oxford men had outgrown such simple pastimes as those wherein the preceding age appears to have taken delight. A Latin poem of the Restoration period depicts academic youth Tumbling in the Hay, watching Frogs swimming, telling Stories under a Hay-mow, making Trimtrams with Rushes and Flowers,—Arcadian recreations which could hardly be expected to satisfy the more mature student of the succeeding century. "Boating, hunting, shooting, fishing," Dibdin writes,—"these formed, in times of yore, the chief amusements of the Oxford

Scholar." Bentham fished and shot, but apparently neither to his own comfort nor to the destruction of life. Riding and attending races on Port Meadow were, as we have seen, the pastimes of Erasmus Philipps, who was at Pembroke in 1720. The wild forest country which two hundred years ago lay adjacent to Oxford on the east and west must have provided opportunities for shooting: the hero of *Academia*, it will be remembered, goes out with his friends on a kind of poaching expedition: some fifty years later that stern *censor morum*, Dr. Newton of Hart Hall, is very severe on sport. There is not, he says, "a more piteous creature anywhere to be found, than a young Scholar, who, having been hunting and shooting for four or five months in the country, can think of nothing but hunting and shooting from the moment he returns to his College." As the century progressed, and enclosures began to take the place of rough unfenced woodland, casual wanderings over the country in search of game must have been discouraged: and it appears that the recreations of undergraduates began to resemble (though not in the matter of organised games) those of modern times. Few so far mortified the flesh as to take a walk: but diaries and reminiscences of the years between 1750 and 1800 are full of allusions to boating,—not as an exercise nor as a means to the attainment of renown, but for mere pleasure. Like the undergraduate in Clough's poem, men

"Went in their life and the sunshine rejoicing, to Nuneham and Godstow."

"The Oxonian," a poem of 1778, gives a convenient catalogue of indoor and outdoor sports:

"Now up the silver stream
To Medley's bowers, or Godstowe's fam'd retreat,
Straining each nerve, I urge the dancing skiff:
Or, rushing headlong down the perilous steep,
Rouse the sly Reynard from his dark abode:
Or, if inclement vapours load the sky,
Tennis awhile the heavy hours beguiles:
Or, at the billiards' fatal board, I stake
With anxious heart the last sad remnant coin."

Excursions (what the slang of the day called *schemes*) to neighbouring villages on the river were common,—such as what Mr. Philipps calls "a most agreeable passage" to "Newnam." One of the poets of the *Oxford Sausage* deplores the necessity of assuming a grizzle-wig, the emblem of advancing years:

"No more the wherry feels my stroke so true:
At skittles, in a Grizzle, can I play?
Woodstock, farewell! and Wallingford, adieu!
Where many a scheme relieved the lingering day."

The Trinity undergraduate of the metrical diary above mentioned represents himself as making expeditions down the river in a "light-built galley" called the Hobby-Horse:

"A game of quoits will oft our stay
A while at Sandford Inn delay:
Or rustic nine-pins: then once more
We hoist our sail, and tug the oar
To Newnham bound."

Another letter describes how gownsmen choose their boats,

"Skiff, gig, and cutter, or canoe,"

and then change academic garb for a more suitable costume:

"Each in a trice
Becomes transform'd, with trousers nice,
Jacket and catskin cap supplied
(Black gowns and trenchers chuck'd aside)"—

whereby it would appear that men went down to the river in cap and gown,—as they still are sometimes feigned to do by the imaginative. But about the same time, Mr. G. V. Cox records in his *Reminiscences*, "boating had not yet become a systematic pursuit in Oxford." There were six-oared boats (no "eights") in which men used to go to Nuneham. Mr. Cox himself belonged to a crew who wore, as a kind of uniform, green leather caps, with jackets and trousers of nankeen: such were the barbaric adornments of our rude forefathers. Perhaps, after all, the Dons who disapproved of aquatic pastimes had some æsthetic justification.

Such and suchlike details one gleans from eighteenth century academic literature. But youthful satire and middle-aged reminiscence are both apt to be tainted by convention. For a clear, real, first-hand impression of at least one contemporary mind, one turns rather to the pages of Hearne's diary, or rather commonplace book; where certainly there

is nothing of artificiality. If the personality of eighteenth century Oxonians in general is often rather evasive,—if "the rest are but fleeting shades," —Hearne at least lives: not by virtue of "literature," but simply because he chronicles his candid opinion of the men and things that came within his view, and records whatever happened to interest him in his miscellaneous readings and encounters: and a great many things interested him. Few men can have been so inquisitive. He had the true passion for finding out, and "when found, making a note of"—whether or not the information acquired could be in any way delightful or useful to himself or to any other human being—which makes some men antiquarians and others journalists: he himself was compact of both. Hence his "Collections" are the strangest miscellany. Excerpts from old chronicles, notes on topography or numismatics, heads of controversies between the learned on obscure points of history or scholarship, stand cheek by jowl with an account of the remarkable weather of last Wednesday or Mr. So-and-so's fall from his horse, or the very imprudent marriage contracted by Mr. Someone else of St. Peter's parish. We pass from scandal about the Elector of Hanover, or gossip about the private life of Heads of Houses, or reflections neither optimistic nor charitable on the present state of the University, to the interesting facts that Men did not wear Braccae before the Flood, and that Mr. Smith of

Iffley hath been a barber and was sixty-three years of age last Tuesday, and that Mrs. Brown of Cat Street is a very proud woman, and hath a Son now Bachelor of Arts that is a debauched whiggish young spark. Nothing is too small or too great to be put down in that extraordinary note-book. One has the picture of a student who was also keenly interested in politics, whose most salient qualities were his partisan rancour and his diligence in acquiring scraps of miscellaneous learning. In both respects Hearne was a characteristic representative of more than one type of Oxonian. Himself very careful and accurate ("very ugly but very industrious," is Zachary Uffenbach's character of him, indeed few scholars have published so many learned works in a lifetime of fifty-seven years), he had no consideration for slipshod work: Universities are of course always the home of the student to whom an error of detail is as an offence against the Moral Law. In that age of antiquarian research, Hearne was naturally brought into contact with the work of many recent and contemporary students, collectors like himself of antiquities: and while he had several intimate friends and correspondents among them—the Rawlinsons, for instance, and Browne Willis—there were others whom he allowed himself to criticise with the freedom of the truly learned. He had no great opinion even of Anthony Wood, and willingly relates scandal about Humphrey Wanley. But his bitterest animosity was directed against his

political opponents. In this respect, too, he is a not unfamiliar figure to those who live in Universities: for there is no partisan so irreconcilable as the *Gelehrte* turned politician. Hearne was *plus royaliste que le roi.* He was a very good hater: what human kindness he had was not at the service of Whigs or lukewarm Tories. No one, indeed, satisfied him but consistent Nonjurors: he never took "the detestable oaths" himself, and he gloats over the melancholy ends of some who had been faithful once, and afterwards turned traitor. Nothing is bad enough for such renegades.

Indeed, Hearne's political stalwartness was a very unfortunate thing for his antiquarian studies. From 1701 he was employed as a sub-librarian in the Bodleian, where he was completely in his element: being, if any man ever was, born to live among books. Had he not been a Nonjuror, with a rooted and too often expressed hatred of all Whigs and many Tories, his enemies would have been fewer and his position consequently safer: as it was, it was dangerous to be on the losing side in the early days of George I.'s reign, and there were many in the University who, if Hearne's account is to be believed, were resolved to make the library too hot to hold him. With this horrid intention, they inveigled Hearne into accepting the jointly held posts of "Archetypographus"—director of the University Press—and "Superior Beadle": which being done, the malignity of his enemies,

aided by the faithlessness of his friends, discovered that the sub-librarianship could not be held along with these offices. Hearne played the obvious card, and resigned the Archetypographate and Beadleship. But Hudson, the librarian, was not to be so easily put off: he was a man of resource, and proceeded to curtail Hearne's privileges by altering the locks of the library, so that the sub-librarian's key did not fit them. This was bad enough. But it was a more serious matter when Hearne's tenure of the sub-librarianship was made contingent on his taking the oath of allegiance to the Hanoverian dynasty. This he would not do: but neither did he intend to resign: so he resorted to the extremely injudicious compromise of retaining the post while ceasing to perform the duties. This of course gave his enemies an obvious opening: they could do no less than appoint a successor: and the too faithful Nonjuror not only lost his office, but was, he says, even excluded from using the library as an ordinary student—a real tragedy for an antiquarian. How far Hearne was the victim of deliberate malignity, and how much he himself contributed to the catastrophe, it is not very easy to say. Quite possibly academic authority, fearing in those troubled days for its own safety, was willing enough to make a show of loyalty by dealing hardly with a Nonjuror: but if some of the methods which it employed were neither dignified nor straightforward, it appears equally certain that Hearne was

a very cantankerous man, and did nothing to conciliate antagonism.

But even now apparently the malevolence of Hearne's enemies was not satisfied. Martyrdom for conscience' sake was always threatening him in these days: he feared that he might be arrested and (as he says) "imprisoned for life on account of my Principles." Possibly his fears were well grounded. At any rate, he thought it prudent to absent himself as much as possible from Oxford,—until this tyranny should be overpast,—and therefore would slip out of St. Edmund Hall, where he lived, early in the morning and walk out into the country, picking up local antiquities *en route*. Hearne was as great a walker as he was an indefatigable researcher. One sees him about this time walking out to Horspath and back by Iffley, reading *Tully De Natura Deorum* all the while: or in later days going farther afield, to Ditchley, or to Fairford with its beautiful church windows, or to Aldworth in Berkshire, where the giant crusaders of the Dela Beche family lie sculptured in the grey church between the downs and the woodland—full twenty miles from Oxford. But Hearne thought little of thirty miles or so in the day: that would be nothing for a pedestrian who—if one can believe him—could cover the eight miles between Dorchester and Oxford in an hour and a quarter.

Some years later there was a further and perhaps more real menace of molestation: for "unluckily,"

Mr. Madan says, "the prefaces to Hearne's editions of Camden's *Elizabetha* and of *Guilielmus Neubrigensis* afforded some ground for his enemies to allege that he had slighted the Reformation, and thereby the Protestant character of the Church of England": and a prosecution was threatened. But this danger also passed away: a change of Vice-Chancellors brought in Dr. Shippen, who was "very much inclined to do all possible service" to Hearne: nor was it likely that the Chancellor (Lord Arran, brother of Ormonde) would press matters against an extreme Tory. Anyhow, the industrious, combative little man was allowed to live peaceably (if indeed Hearne ever lived peaceably) in St. Edmund Hall, where he continued to receive visits from his "Honest" friends, and in his lighter moments to chronicle family and University scandal with his usual acrimonious diligence: dying in 1735 with the reputation of an eccentric scholar, "with a singularity in his exterior Behaviour or Manner, which was the Jest of the Man of Wit and polite Life," but one who "secretly enjoyed the Approbation, Favour, and correspondence of the Greatest Men of the Age."

VI

DISCIPLINE

IT is probably a plain inference from the foregoing pages that the eighteenth century undergraduate was seldom heavily burdened by disciplinary regulations. He was left much to himself at the beginning of the period: those uniform principles of College government which in our happier age prevail throughout the University had not yet been developed: rules were carelessly observed and laxly enforced, and crimes condoned or but slightly punished with which we should deal much more severely. It was an unsatisfactory state of things, no doubt: yet in justice to the Collegiate authorities of that day it is fair to remember the great difficulties with which they had to cope. In respect of the subjects of discipline, they were confronted with changed or at least changing conditions. It has already been shown that the seventeenth century "Man" was, in most cases, a boy in his early teens. The rules for his government were made for schoolboys. His amusements were childish: his crimes, says Dr. Fowler, are often

trivial and boyish — throwing snowballs in Hall ("*quod globulos niveos*" is the criminal's confession, "*in aula projecimus*") or going into the buttery without leave. At least the punishment register of Corpus Christi, an ample and instructive source of information for the discipline of a hundred and fifty years, records in the seventeenth century very few instances of "manly" offences. But after the Revolution the average age of undergraduates had considerably increased. Very young boys were no doubt still admitted: as late as 1730 a Corpus "man" matriculated at twelve: and in fact the variety of ages must have materially added to the difficulty of College government: but on the whole it is true to say that Heads and Deans were confronted with the task of adapting rules made for boys to the administration of societies of young men. Old College regulations were inadequate to the changed circumstances. To add to their embarrassments, the whole fabric of academic law and order had been violently shaken by the storms of the Civil War period, and the succeeding licence of the Restoration: and during the reigns of Charles II. and James II. at least (for it is to be noticed that Stephen Penton in the *Guardian's Instruction* speaks well of academic discipline in 1688) Colleges must often have been a kind of Bohemia, where the scholar might follow his amusements, disreputable or otherwise, with as little check or hindrance as the student of the Quartier Latin.

Such was the inheritance of the eighteenth from the preceding century: if its performance was not distinguished, justice demands that we should take into account the severity of its handicap. Further, some of the grosser forms of vice which the early Georgians failed to visit with what we should consider sufficient rigour, were discreditable rather to society at large than to the Universities in particular. They seem heinous to us: but they are not necessarily condemned by contemporary public opinion. No candid critic can altogether deny the charges of laxity and indifference, and an apparent inability to distinguish between various kinds of crimes. The law of England which inflicted capital punishment for homicide and petty larceny was not more comprehensive in its operation than the disciplinary system of a College where every offence is apparently punished by "crossing" (being *convictu privatus*) for periods varying from a week to a month. The man who (with a singular modernness) pleads a sick relation, "instead of which" he goes to London, is "crossed" for a fortnight. Ben. Wilding suffers the same punishment for a week, as a penalty for making a noise in the quadrangle, assailing the Dean *maledictis et contumeliis*, and not hesitating to bandy words—*inepte garrire*—with the President himself. A like fate awaits William Nicholas, for spending the night out and causing riot and disorder in the streets. "Notice," says Dr. Fowler, "the extraordinary leniency of the

punishment for this offence, which would now undoubtedly be met by rustication for two or more terms." It is still more surprising when deprivation of commons (with, it is true, a declamation in Hall thrown in) is regarded as an adequate penalty for homicide—even on the charitable and perhaps necessary assumption that the crime was only attempted. Drunkenness—even in Chapel—and gross immorality are similarly visited,—sometimes with the additional sentence of a public apology. When every allowance has been made,—when it has been allowed that expulsion was difficult, that "rustication" was rare (though not unheard of: a Christ Church man was rusticated about 1770), and that society in general condoned the grosser forms of vice,—one is struck on the whole by the indulgence shown to offenders. The rusticated Christ Church undergraduate above-mentioned had been guilty of a crime so gross, according to the historian of the House, as to deserve expulsion. The nature of the offence is left to the reader's imagination: but if the punishment is to be regarded as inadequate, it must have been heinous indeed. In addition to his temporary banishment the unhappy man was condemned to an imposition of almost incredible vastness. He was ordered, says Mr. Thompson, to abridge the whole of Herodotus: to draw out "schemes and enunciations," and to master *Euclid*, books 5, 6, 11, 12: to write down and work all the examples in M'Laurin's *Algebra*, Part 1.: to

make notes on all St. Paul's Epistles, and a careful diary of the hundred last Psalms in Hebrew: and to translate into Latin both parts of the ninth discourse of the second volume of Sherlock's *Sermons*. Whatever the lot of the virtuous man under the rule of Dean Markham, the criminal at least had every incentive to a lifetime of industry.

But if eighteenth century punishments were in general reprehensibly light, it does not follow that we are entitled to throw any stones at the authorities who inflicted them. We owe our predecessors too much for that. Heirs as we are of their disciplinary rules, we cannot shut our eyes to the patent fact that the eighteenth century found Oxford turbulent and anarchic, and left it law-abiding—not perhaps intellectually energetic, but peaceful and fairly well-governed. The disorders of the time were many, but the champions of good government were not few. Something was done to this end in the early years of the century, when the misbehaviour of undergraduates was outrunning even the very tolerant ideas of the time: and later on, in the years which mark, it is true, the grossest intellectual darkness of the period, came the generation of Dr. Newton and Dr. Conybeare, sturdy old formalists with at least very sound principles of external decorum,—men who did certainly try to introduce decency and good order into societies which stood sorely in need of reformation. One begins to hear of minor matters like com-

pulsory attendance at Chapel services. "We have a company," says the undergraduate in Miller's *Humours of Oxford*, "of formal old surly Fellows who take pleasure in making one act contrary to one's conscience—and tho' for their own parts they never see the inside of a Chappel throughout the year, yet if one of us miss but two mornings in the week, they'll set one a plaguy Greek imposition to do." Conybeare was successively Rector of Exeter and Dean of Christ Church (sent to the latter foundation with the reputation of a reformer "to cleanse that Augean stable"), precisely the two Colleges which at the beginning of the century had the name of being "the most dissolute in Oxford." "He makes a great stir in the College" (Christ Church), Hearne writes in 1733, "at present pretending to great matters, such as locking up the gates at 9 o'clock at night, having the keys brought up to him, turning out young women from being bedmakers," having an ambition "even to exceed that truly great man Bishop Fell, to whom he is not in the least to be compared,"—naturally, being a Whig. Similarly, Dr. Newton's scheme for the better government of Hart Hall includes the shutting of the College gates at nine, and placing of the key with the Principal: and the Visitor's Injunctions prescribe a like observance at Merton in 1737. These are small and trivial matters: but the fact that they are chronicled at all shows that considerable laxity had prevailed: and of course it

did not cease at once. Some fifteen years after Dr. Newton, the "Lounger" stays out of his College till one: nor does it appear that the irregularity of the evening is avenged by the matutinal Dean. As time went on, the general rules of College discipline became stereotyped under men like Dr. Randolph of Corpus Christi and "the Great" Cyril Jackson of Christ Church: it is from the later years of the eighteenth century that we have inherited the traditions of law and order which—necessarily modified with the changes of later social life—have on the whole subsisted into the twentieth.

For the Newtons and the Conybeares variety of age among their pupils must have been one of the principal *cruces* of the disciplinarian. This would be less felt by their immediate successors: but the Randolphs and the Jacksons had to deal with the still more embarrassing problem (due, it is true, to a system which they themselves encouraged or perpetuated) of variety of social status. "There were great difficulties," says Mr. Wordsworth, "arising from the social condition of the members of the Universities." Both Oxford and Cambridge deliberately emphasised those class distinctions to which they have never—at least in the past two hundred years—been insensible: and it must have been very difficult to frame disciplinary rules which could be impartially enforced on "noblemen" and gentlemen-commoners on the one hand,

and servitors on the other. When Philalethes writes in 1790 that "in *several* Colleges, the heirs of the first families in the kingdom submit to the same exercises, and the same severity of discipline, with the lowest member of the society," the tone and diction of his statement are sufficient indication that the spirit of Hugby and Crump was already prevailing in the councils of Colleges.

It was the gentleman-commoner who was the problem—a problem, it must be admitted, not satisfactorily solved. Towards the end of the century he appears full-blown, in all his splendour and with all his immunities,—a grave scandal to a writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1798; "a spirit of expensive rivalship," he says, "has long been kept up by purse-proud nabobs, merchants, and citizens, against the nobility and gentry of the kingdom. Universities may rue the contagion. They were soon irrecoverably infected. In them extraordinary largesses began to purchase immunities: the indolence of the opulent was sure of absolution: and the emulation of literature was gradually superseded by the emulation of profligate extravagance: till a third order of pupils appeared" (besides, that is, commoners and servitors): "a pert and pampered race, too froward for controul, too headlong for persuasion, too independent for chastisement: privileged prodigals. These are the *gentlemen-commoners* of Oxford, and the *fellow-commoners* of Cambridge. They are perfectly their

own masters, and they take the lead in every disgraceful frolic of juvenile debauchery. They are curiously tricked out in cloth of gold, of silver, and of purple, and feast most sumptuously throughout the year:

> "Fruges consumere nati,
> Sponsi Penelopes, nebulones, Alcinoique
> In cute curanda plus æquo operata juventus."

These gilded youths, the writer complains, can evade all their academic duties by the payment of trifling fines: "a gentleman-commoner pays for neglecting matins or vespers, 2d. each time: the hours of closing gates, 3d.: lectures, 4d.: meals in hall, 1s.: St. Mary's on Sunday, if detected, 1s." These "paltry mulcts" are obviously quite ineffectual: it is clearly worth a rich man's while to purchase absolute liberty at the price of about 13s. a week.

The nineteenth century—which abolished noblemen and gentlemen-commoners and servitors, made all men at least nominally equal before the law, and witnessed the growth of a sound public opinion in and outside of Colleges—has infinitely simplified the problems of College discipline for the twentieth. The development of the "public school spirit" makes for due subordination and obedience. Undergraduates in a College are no longer a miscellaneous aggregate of casually assorted individuals, but members of a corporate whole with traditions, usually healthy ones, to maintain: and if it is undeniably true that corporate unity

cemented by athletic triumphs has its own complications for the Dean, it is obviously easier to apply existing rules to a comparatively homogeneous crowd than to frame new ones to suit the individual instance.

History is not very full on the Proctorial exercise of authority. The scenes among which Proctors moved were less turbulent than in the Tudor days when they carried poleaxes: indeed, when the state of manners is considered, Oxford streets must be considered to have been remarkably peaceful. Politics, as will be seen, did occasionally create difficult and even dangerous situations: but on the whole the main business of the Proctor was dealing with minor irregularities, such as the frequenting of taverns and coffee-houses. These were "drawn" as nowadays.

"Nor Proctor thrice" (so sings the panegyrist of Oxford Ale)

> "with vocal heel alarms
> Our joys secure, nor deigns the lowly roof
> Of Pothouse snug to visit: wiser he
> The splendid tavern haunts, or Coffee-house
> Of James or Juggins."

The "Oxonian" of 1778 is gated or set an imposition: the Proctor detects him in some crime or peccadillo,

> "And then, with mandate stern, to College dooms
> Me, hapless wight, with dreadful fines amers'd,
> Till one long moon revolves her tedious round:
> Some godly author, Tillotson perchance,
> Or moral bard to conn, with heart full sad."

It appears that the Vice-Chancellor himself occasionally "walked,"—at least in Hearne's day,—and even "drew" a tavern in which he found the Proctors! One is reminded of a Homeric Theomachy.

Then, as now, Proctors were concerned largely with enforcing due observance of rules relating to academical dress—and whatever its negligence in other matters, the University towards the end of the century was precise and rigorous in this respect. Indeed it appears that individual licence stood in need of regulation. Academical dress (like all others) progresses from variety to uniformity, and from amplitude to comparative scantiness. The Laudian Statutes, for instance, enjoin a diversity of headgear quite unknown to the dull monotony of moderns: and the Laudian Statutes as to dress remained in force till 1770. Just a hundred years before that, Loggan's "fashion plates" abundantly illustrate the academic habit of the day. According to these, all undergraduates on the foundation of Colleges and all graduates except Doctors of Law, Medicine, and Music, wear square trencher caps like our own, but in the case of undergraduates without the tuft or "apex," which has now become a tassel. Commoners and servitors have a round cap with a limp crown: the same kind of headgear, but with a higher crown and more elaborately pleated, is worn by Doctors of Law, Medicine, and Music, also by "noblemen"—peers or peers' sons,

or what are called *nobiles minorum gentium*, that is, Baronets or Knights. The "nobleman's" gown varies in adornment according to his rank, and may be of any colour that pleases him (at Cambridge, always more licentious than Oxford in the matter of colour, Lord Fitzwilliam when a Fellow-Commoner of Trinity Hall in 1764 wore a pink gown laden with gold lace): all other gowns were black, and in general much more ample than modern custom prescribes. In 1675 at any rate, and probably for some time subsequently, all were *talares* in compliance with the Statute,—reaching, that is, to the ankles,—and even trailing on the ground in the case of some graduates. From the rude indication given by the illustration of the *Oxford Sausage*, one infers that the undergraduate gown of 1760 was more in keeping with the regulations than the present ridiculous fragment which hangs from the commoner's back: but the accuracy of illustrators is not always to be trusted. In 1675 and 1760 all alike, graduate and undergraduate, wear bands: in 1778 a "flowing band, that saintly ornament," is still *de rigueur*: the white tie worn by candidates in the schools appears to be its modern representative.

The wearing of academical dress was much more stringently enforced in the eighteenth century than at present. Nor was this all: both at Oxford and Cambridge authority undertook to prescribe the cut and colour of coats: and as in 1633 so

in 1793, the "absurd and extravagant habit of wearing boots" (*absurdus ille et fastuosus publice in ocreis ambulandi mos*) was sternly forbidden:

> "But the whole set, pray understand,
> Must walk full dress'd in cap and band,
> For should grave Proctor chance to meet
> A buck in boots along the street,
> He stops his course, and with permission
> Asking his name, sets imposition,"

according to the author of the Trinity letters above mentioned. From the same source it is to be gathered that men even went down to the river in cap and gown, and changed, as we should say, in the barge. According as the academic habit was more constantly worn, so much the more was it of course liable to mutations of fashion: and probably the licence of a notoriously "dressy" age tended to introduce unwarranted innovations. At any rate in 1770 fresh legislation appears to have become necessary.

The revised statutes of this year (besides extending the use of the square cap and "apex" to all undergraduates except servitors, and shortening the sleeves of scholars to something like their present length) emphasises the distinctions of rank and status with great care: and when it is remembered that one of the arguments for the expulsion of the Methodists from St. Edmund Hall in 1768 was that they were persons of low degree and therefore unfit to associate with gentlemen, one may conclude that the University had entered

with zest on that practice of "honeying to the whisper of a lord," from which even democratic ages have not always been free. Peers and peers' sons were to wear gowns not necessarily black, ornamented with gold lace, and gilded "tufts": Baronets the same, except that their gowns must be black: gentlemen-commoners, silk gowns and velvet caps: servitors were to show their inferiority by lacking the "apex."

> "In silk, gay Lords the streets parade,
> Gold tassels nodding over head,"

writes the Trinity undergraduate of 1792: noblemen had already worn gilt tufts in 1738, though not actually enjoined to do so by law. These barbaric puerilities did not definitely disappear till 1870,—one hopes for ever. But while they are at present in abeyance, it is never safe to trust the reverential instincts of the English middle class.

VII

EXERCISES AND EXAMINATIONS

IT is difficult to find exact parallels for the modern system under which our oldest Universities are governed. It is in a sense purely democratic: the legislative body is not merely representative, but is in theory, as in the republics of Athens and Rome, the whole mass of qualified voters. All proposals are submitted in Oxford to Congregation first,—that is, to the Doctors and Masters of Arts resident within a mile and a half of Carfax,—and if approved by that body have still to come before the larger constituency called Convocation, which includes all Doctors and Masters, in whatever part of the globe, whose names still remain on their College books. It is of course but seldom that non-residents exercise the franchise. Most subjects of academic deliberation interest them but little: on the rare occasions when the rural or metropolitan voter is invited by ardent partisans to come up in his thousands and decide some great issue,—such as the question of admitting laymen to serve as examiners in Theology, —champions of the vanquished cause have been

heard to murmur at his interference, and to compare the decisions of a perfect democracy possessing the franchise on a theoretically intellectual basis to the obstructive methods of an unpopular House of Lords.

But while a democracy legislates, the initiative, till very lately, rested with an oligarchy. No measure could be proposed to Congregation unless sanctioned by the Hebdomadal Council, a senate of some twenty members elected in such a way as to represent the three estates of Professors, Heads of Houses, and ordinary Masters of Arts. Council deliberates: Congregation and Convocation pass laws. Thus we preserved something like the relation between the Boule and Ecclesia of Athens, or the Senate and People of Rome.

This system dates, in its details, from the Commission of 1852. Before that epoch the Hebdomadal Council was not as now a body elected by the University, but consisted simply of the Heads of Houses. Nothing is more significant of the absolute identification of the University with its Colleges. Certain University and College functionaries, in addition to the "Regent Masters" (Masters of Arts of less than a year's standing), composed what was then known as Congregation: and the memory of them survives in what we now call the "Ancient House of Congregation," which, *inter alia*, confers degrees. Other resident M.A.'s had no special status: they were not differentiated

as to their legislative duties from non-resident: and in fact in the eighteenth century it cannot have been necessary to emphasise the distinction between resident and extraneous Masters, the intervention of the latter in those days of slower communication being difficult or impossible. Then, as was the case till lately, legislation was initiated by Council, and ratified by the body of Masters of Arts. These latter were not indeed always allowed to exercise their full share of government. Hearne complains that the University is ruled, not as it should be by the whole body of Masters, nor even by the collective wisdom of all the Heads of Houses, but by clandestine meetings of the Vice-Chancellor and Doctors: for whom "it is usual to act as they think fit, though sometimes they are thwarted by the Masters." The action of such a Vehmgericht is of course unconstitutional, and also (says Hearne) disastrous in its results: for although the Masters may be comparatively young and imprudent, they are more likely to give an honest and disinterested vote than Doctors, "who are swayed oftentimes by the Preferments they expect, such as Bishopricks, Deaneries, Prebends, etc." Mere M.A.'s "have innocency as yet," and the best elections (note that elections are all the University business in 1718) are those which have been carried by them. But "the Heads of Houses," protests a writer in 1722, "have nothing so much at heart as to defeat the Power of the Masters."

The qualification for Mastership was, as now, membership of an academic society during a certain period, payment of dues, and performance of exercises.

It may be doubted whether moderns retain that whole-hearted belief in the educational efficacy and saving grace of examinations which certainly prevailed thirty years ago. Then, they were the supreme and final test of merit and the only real guide of study: and society was to be regenerated by them. There may be some who would still maintain that these optimistic expectations have been realised. We have not quite lost our illusions. But all good things have their questionable side: a system, which at first was a useful servant, has now become a rather tyrannous master: probably most teachers in Universities at least regard examinations as something of a necessary evil: even society in general has begun to suspect that there may be other means of selection for the public service. Perhaps it is a sign of improved ideals that the man who aims at a First Class for itself (that hero of the early and middle Victorian age) is now regarded as a rather vulgar and unsatisfactory person, and that, in the opinion of most, examination is no better than a wolf held by the ears: there are inconveniences in retaining hold of the ravenous beast, but still graver inconveniences might result from letting it go.

Nevertheless, though the first rapture of enthusiasm be past, there is no sign as yet of careless-

ness or half-heartedness in the working of the machine. We still regard the setting and answering and marking of "Papers" as part of the serious business of life, and approach these high matters in a properly serious spirit,—as indeed is only right, since we are dealing with what, after all, is still (as Greek used to be) a highroad to positions of emolument. The system may be good or bad: it is probably a little of both: but at any rate pains are taken to make our examinations as real tests as possible of sound knowledge: and one of the *cruces* which confront persons connected with University education is the meritorious endeavour to increase the burden of "The Schools" by bringing their tests into close relation with all the latest discoveries,—a relation which is appreciated by the serious student, but which the friends of the average man regard as generally unpalatable and always unnecessary.

But Oxford in the earlier part of the eighteenth century was troubled by no such problems. Academic examinations had few points of contact with academic studies: and if study without examination is not always fully profitable to the ordinary man, much less profitable is examination without study.

Had the Laudian Statutes been obeyed in the spirit as they were in the letter, there would have been little room for detraction. According to their provisions, the student was bound to perform a

succession of exercises for the Bachelor's degree which should have tested the continuous steps of progress with sufficient thoroughness: and finally to pass an examination which, according to the best ideas of the period, was comprehensive enough. Three public appearances correspond roughly to our own "Smalls," "Mods.," and "Greats": in the first place, what was technically called "Disputationes in Parviso," and popularly known as "Generals," or "Juraments"; next, an intermediate test, "answering under bachelor," with a B.A. as "Moderator" (the name of which, as also its place in the undergraduate's academic career, is recalled by our "Moderations," established by the Commission of 1852); lastly, the examination for the degree. The subjects of this were supposed to be (to quote Mr. Wordsworth's list) grammar, rhetoric, logic, ethics, geometry, Greek classics, fluency in the Latin tongue. These various stages of examination, it will be observed, were purely "pass" tests. There was no division of "Pass" and "Class," no opportunity for distinction. When Mr. Wordsworth points out, with the justifiable complacency of a member of a more virtuous University, that during the eighteenth century Oxford had no honour examinations, Oxonians can but blush in silence and admit that the fact is so.

Critics in the Press and elsewhere have been known to comment with some severity on the modern qualification for Masters of Arts. These,

as is well known, obtain their coveted distinction —once they have taken their Bachelor's degree— simply by keeping their names for a certain number of terms on the books of their Colleges, and paying certain dues and fees: a system which it is difficult to defend in a manner entirely satisfactory to external critics. Indeed it is not so very long since Cambridge extended this latitude even to her would-be Bachelors, and granted the B.A. degree to some of her alumni, who, while their natural modesty shrank from a public display of intellectual gifts, yet proved their loyalty to a home of learning by paying academic dues during a period of ten years. Neither University can boast that its present practice is more respectable than the theoretical requirements of the Laudian Statutes. During the eighteenth century the B.A. degree was not, as now, the seal and stamp of a completed education: it was only the preliminary to a course of studies and examinations ultimately qualifying for Mastership. With us the B.A. is relatively hard, and the M.A. easy to obtain: in the eighteenth century the period of really difficult and serious study began—in theory—after the Bachelor's degree had been taken. The candidate for Mastership must reside: only, it is true, for one term in the year—so far had the law of constant residence been relaxed: but then we do not insist even on that. As for the undergraduate, so for the Bachelor, there was an imposing succession of disputations

and *viva voce* exercises to be performed, as preliminaries to a regular examination. He must "determine" by taking his part in two Lenten disputations on grammar, rhetoric, ethics, politics, or logic. Once, at least, he must dispute "apud Augustinenses"—or according to the slang phrase "do Austins." Then there were "disputationes quodlibeticæ," wherein the candidate apparently held himself ready to answer all comers on any question: "sex solennes lectiones" in natural and moral philosophy, intended to stimulate research: two declamations to be delivered before a Proctor, intended (says Mr. Wordsworth) as exercises in polite learning and elegant composition. Due attention having thus been paid to matter and form, style, erudition, and readiness in argument, the candidate was confronted with a final examination, which left nothing to be desired in comprehensiveness. Its subjects were supposed to be geometry, natural philosophy, astronomy, metaphysics, history, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. Yet Universities are reproached for the narrowness of their sphere of study!

Unfortunately, this alarming array of obstacles to the aspirant had degenerated into a series of meaningless formalities. "Juraments" were constantly neglected. The examination for the B.A. degree was, towards the end of the century, held in private, and candidates chose their own examiners: "who never fail," says *Terræ Filius* in the earlier

part of the century, "to be their old cronies and toping companions." When all allowance is made for the Whig animus of Nicholas Amherst, for whom any stick is good enough to beat his Tory Dons, the picture which he draws of contemporary examinations and disputations is sufficiently depressing. Disputation for the Bachelor's degree "is no more than a formal repetition of a set of syllogisms upon some ridiculous question in logick, which they get by rote, or perhaps only read out of their caps, which lie before them with their notes in them. These commodious sets of syllogisms are called 'Strings,' and descend from undergraduate to undergraduate in a regular succession." "The first exercise necessary for a degree" (says a writer in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1780) "is the holding a disputation in the Public Schools on some question of Logic or Moral Philosophy. It is termed in the phrase of the University *doing generals*. . . . Every undergraduate in the University, if brought to confession, has in his possession certain papers which have been handed down from generation to generation, and are denominated *strings*. . . . These strings consist of two or three arguments, each on those subjects which are discussed in the schools, fairly transcribed in that syllogistical form which alone is admitted on this occasion. The two disputants having procured a sufficient number of them, and learned to repeat them by heart, proceed with confidence to the place

appointed. From one o'clock till three they must remain seated opposite to each other, entertaining themselves as well as so ridiculous a situation will admit: and if any Proctor should come in, who is appointed to preside over these exercises, they begin to rehearse what they have learned, frequently without the least knowledge of what is meant. . . . I have subjoined a translation of one of these arguments.

Opponent. What think you of this question, whether universal ideas are formed by abstraction?

Respondent. I affirm it.

Opp. Universal ideas are not formed by abstraction: therefore you are deceived.

Resp. I deny the antecedent.

Opp. I prove the antecedent. Whatever is formed by sensation alone is not formed by abstraction: but universal ideas are formed by sensation alone: therefore universal ideas are not formed by abstraction.

Resp. I deny the minor.

Opp. I prove the minor. The idea of solidity is an universal idea: but the idea of solidity is formed by sensation alone: therefore universal ideas are formed by sensation alone.

Resp. I deny the major.

Opp. I prove the major. The idea of solidity arises from the collision of two solid bodies: therefore the idea of solidity is formed by sensation alone.

Resp. The idea of solidity, I confess, is formed by sensation: but the mind can consider it as abstracted from sensation."

The "sex solennes lectiones" were called "Wall lectures," being delivered *pro forma* to the bare walls of an empty room. The "Collectors" who arrange the preliminaries for Determination were, according to Amherst, systematically venal; "every determiner that can afford it values himself upon presenting one of the Collectors with a broad piece, or half a broad: and Mr. Collector in return entertains his benefactors with a good supper and as much wine as they can drink, besides 'gracious days'" (when the candidate would be detained for the shortest possible time) "and commodious schools. . . . This, to me, seems the great business of determination: to pay money, and to get drunk." Hearne, writing in 1727, says that young Mr. Dodwell of Magdalen had bribed the "Collector" at his "Determination" to get him a gracious day, "that he might be up at disputing the less time": an act which Hearne says Dodwell's father would have detested. But then Dodwell the elder was a Nonjuror, while his son was not. Vicesimus Knox (a St. John's man like Amherst), who took his M.A. degree in 1753, draws a similar picture towards the close of the century. Examinations for the B.A. degree were almost social functions, held not, as now, at fixed times, but so as to suit the convenience of the individual candidate and

the examiners whom he chose. "The examiners and the candidate often converse on the last drinking bout or on horses, or read the newspaper or a novel, or divert themselves as well as they can in any manner till the clock strikes eleven, when all parties descend and the *testimonium* is signed by the masters." Knox, too, lays stress on the regular use at all examinations and exercises of traditional forms of argument: whether the candidate is confronted with "Generals," "Austins," or "Quodlibets," every obstacle is surmounted by the help of "foolish syllogisms on foolish subjects," "handed down from generation to generation on long slips of paper." John Scott (Lord Eldon) took his B.A. degree in 1770, after an examination in Hebrew and history: he is said to have been asked two questions only—"What is the Hebrew for *the place of a skull*?" and "Who founded University College?" The story is related by Cambridge men and disbelieved (as Mr. Wordsworth confesses) by Oxonians: but whether true or false, it is not *a priori* improbable, and Oxford need not strain at a mere gnat like this. "The exercises for the M.A. degree," says Dr. Macray in his edition of the *Magdalen College Register*, "were copies of common forms." The fact is allowed: it is unnecessary to pursue the uninviting business of multiplying evidence: *exempla non sunt multiplicanda præter necessitatem.* Except for *Terræ Filius*, no serious protest seems to have been made

until the academic conscience began to stir a little towards the end of the century. In 1773 the author of a pamphlet entitled *Considerations on the Public Exercises for the First and Second Degrees in the University of Oxford* (Mr. Napleton of Brasenose College) recommended that the various examinations should be made real and genuinely public, and that a virtual division between "Pass" and "Class" should be established; or rather, that there should be three classes, the third composed of those who "satisfied the examiners" but were not distinguished. "Austins" and "Quodlibets" were to be abolished. There was to be only one (annual or terminal) examination: which would save much trouble, as it would lead to the conferring of many degrees at the same time: whereas under the old system Congregation had to meet for this purpose perhaps sixty times a year. The proposal was a sign of the times. But no reform was actually attempted till the closing years of the century, when Dr. Cyril Jackson of Christ Church, Dr. Parsons of Balliol, and Dr. Eveleigh of Oriel succeeded in passing the "New Examination Statute," which was the parent of our present examination system. Under it, all examinations were to be held in public and at fixed times, and conducted by persons chosen by the University, no longer the candidate's own friends. The old examination for the B.A. degree remained, with thus modified conditions: but it was supplemented

by an "extraordinary examination," giving an opportunity to persons who wished for distinction, honour-men, in fact. Thus something like the modern Literæ Humaniores School came into existence: honour-men were definitely differentiated from passmen. The credit of this belongs to the eighteenth century: the legislation of 1800 was the parent of successive statutes respecting the final examination and "Responsions in the Parvis," which appears now to supersede the old Generals and Juraments: the Bachelor continued to "determine," but "Quodlibets" and "Austins" apparently ceased to exist. At the same time, logically enough, an attempt was made to "realise" the examination for the M.A. degree. This, however, was never a serious ordeal, and only survived for six years: the examination statute of 1808, one of the many in the early century, superseded it. Daniel Wilson of St. Edmund Hall, afterwards Bishop of Calcutta, devoted three days to direct preparation for it: offered Thucydides and Herodotus in Greek, and *all* the best Latin authors: and obtained the highest honours. Evidently specialism had not said its last word in 1802.

The prescribed subjects for the Laudian examinations look imposing on paper: but the interpretation put upon them made the examinations entirely undeserving of serious observance: the century which neglected them or treated them perfunctorily has at least that justification. In spite of the New

Learning of the Renaissance, the old influence of the Schoolmen was still strongly felt at Oxford: and academic conservatism as well as religious orthodoxy did its best to deprive Oxford Schools of value and interest by refusing to admit the study of recent philosophy. Cambridge at the same period, as is shown by the list of prescribed philosophical works, was far more liberal. But Oxford succeeded in making her examinations null and void: and the keenest students were precisely those who were least likely to take such businesses seriously. If reform was never attempted till late in the century, it was partly the same spirit of conservatism which was responsible: "altering the least Statute," says a writer in 1709, speaking of a different matter, "is striking at the whole foundation": and further, it must be remembered that as the turbulence of the Civil Wars and the licence of the post-Restoration period had seriously interrupted all academic exercises, it was as much as reformers could do to restore the due form and ceremonial, without, for the time, troubling themselves to remodel the subjects of examination.

One is inclined to say of these ancient and happily obsolete "Quodlibets" and "Austins" and "Determinations" *Non ragioniam di lor, ma guarda e passa.* Yet before passing to less depressing topics, we are confronted with the fact that in spite of the perfunctory nature of the preliminary ordeals, candidates did nevertheless

fail to obtain their degrees: and the grounds of rejection may help a little to the understanding of the attitude of the University towards its examinations. Theoretically, at the present day, Congregation grants every degree on the merits of the candidate: a due statement of his claim is made, the formal sanction of his College produced, and the House is then free to give or refuse the degree. It is all theory: no one is ever refused now. But at least in the earlier part of the eighteenth century, Congregation frequently exercised its right of granting or withholding: candidates, at least for the M.A. degree, were constantly rejected. The ground of rejection had seldom anything to do with intellectual achievement. More often the reasons were moral or political: it was alleged that the candidate was a loose liver, or that he was a dangerous freethinker and read English philosophy, or that he was unsound on Occasional Conformity. When the M.A. degree is refused to the applicant whom Hearne rather surprisingly calls "Wilkins, a Prussian,"—on the ground of his being a Hanoverian, a spy, and in short a Whig,—this is probably a case of application for a degree *honoris causa*, or "by diploma": and so in 1728 the degree by diploma of "Dr. of Physick" was only conferred on Dr. Fullerton, a Nonjuror, after much opposition. Degrees were useful things, and the University was constantly receiving letters of more or less authority recommending such an

one to its favour. But it is the ordinary degree which is in question when we read that Mr. Covert of Hart Hall, who had already been refused his Bachelor of Arts degree "for a great crime," stood again and was again rejected because (as alleged) "1. He had not done Juraments. 2. He had not been resident ever since his Denyal in ye University. 3. He said if he had"—well, broken the Moral Law—"as others in ye University do he should not have been deny'd his Degree." *The third reason "was principally insisted on and was approv'd as sufficient"*: in spite of which Mr. Covert "got two Parsonages." Again, it is the ordinary degree about which there was a great controversy in the case of Mr. Littleton, a Fellow of All Souls', who was accused of having defended "that wicked book call'd *The Rights of ye Christian Church*": but Hearne says that the opposition was really due to "a partial Design of pleasing and caressing the Warden of All Souls', Dr. Gardiner, between whom and divers of the Fellows of that College there is great Enmity." Without multiplying instances, it is sufficiently clear that degrees were granted or refused for reasons wholly unconnected with intellectual performance. We have come to regard a degree as the reward of proficiency (of a kind) in passing examinations. But the University of Oxford in the eighteenth century must not have the same standards applied to it as we should rightly apply to the University

of London in the twentieth. The University which gave to its Proctors the stipend of the Professor of Moral Philosophy may be said to press the theory that "conduct is three parts of life" to an unjustifiable extreme: nevertheless an *advocatus diaboli* might plead that the point of view is intelligible, though perhaps not one that can be fully appreciated by us. We hold that degrees follow examinations,—or some display of intellectual qualifications,—and that examinations are the true tests of study: but the men of the eighteenth century held that Colleges being *ex hypothesi* places of study (a convention which even a cynical age did not call in question), certified residence in a College implied study on the part of the recipient of a College certificate. Thus the formal "grace" which the College granted to its candidate guaranteed that he was intellectually competent. But a University is bound to consider not only the intellectual ability but the moral conduct of its alumni, as fitting them for the due service of Church and State: and therefore might and did refuse its degrees to the Methodist, or the political opponent, or the man who read Locke. The prejudices of the age were remarkable: seldom has partisanship been more bitter and real liberality of thought rarer: yet these things must be taken as we find them. Mere academic exercises, being superfluous as a test of intellectual and no test at all of moral or political fitness, could be and were

regarded as simple survivals, which conservatism retained, but which even conservatism held to be meaningless. They must be retained, because all innovation was dangerous: but no one need care how perfunctorily they were performed.

The great occasion for conferring higher degrees (Doctors' and Masters') at the beginning of the eighteenth century was still the celebrated "Act," taking place in July, and corresponding to the Cambridge "Commencement." It was a time of much solemn formality and many disputations: the "Inceptors"—that is, Bachelors proceeding to the degree of Doctor or Master—disputed according to their kind in philosophy, divinity, law, or physic: in the Faculty of Arts, for which the Sheldonian Theatre was reserved, "the Senior Proctor opposes on all the Questions, and confirms an argument on the First: then the Pro-Proctor and *Terrae Filius* dispute on the Second: and lastly, the *Junior* Proctor on the Third Question: and all the Inceptors are obliged to attend these Disputations from the Beginning to the End, under the Pain of 3s. 4d. At the equal expense of all the Inceptors, there is a sumptuous and elegant Supper at the College or Hall of the *Senior* of each Faculty, for the Entertainment of the Doctors, called the Act-Supper." All this takes place on a Saturday, and the above-mentioned exercises are called Vespers. On Monday, the various personages concerned repair to the Theatre, where "Comitial Exercises"

BROAD STREET

FROM AN ENGRAVING BY J. SKELTON AFTER THE DRAWING BY J. MALCHAIR

are performed, very much as on the Saturday: Proctors and *Terræ Filius* playing the same part as two days before. Then "if there be any person taking a Musick degree, he is to perform a Song of Six or Eight Parts on *Vocal* and *Instrumental* Musick, and then he shall have his creation from the Savilian Professors, etc." (the Savilian Professor of Astronomy, in virtue of his presumed acquaintance with the music of the spheres, is still one of the electors to the Professorship of Music): then Doctors are created, and the Vice-Chancellor closes the Act "in a solemn Speech," and all assemble in the Congregation House, "where, at the supplication of the Doctors and Masters newly created, they are wont to dispense with the wearing of *Boots* and *Slop Shoes*, to which the Doctors and Masters of the Act are oblig'd, during the *Comitia*."

Such is Ayliffe's description of the ceremonial as it should be, in 1714: and these were, so to say, the dry bones of an Act. But solemn functions and holiday festivities are apt to go hand in hand, especially in Universities: and the occasion of conferring of degrees had already for some time played the part of our modern "Commemoration," of which indeed it was the legitimate progenitor. The formal academic business of modern days is limited to the Encænia and the "Degree day" which follows: but the length of the entire festival remains much the same as in antiquity, though the days are differently occupied. Contemporary

literature describes the Act as a season ruinous to undergraduates, whose pockets are emptied by it just as are his who is privileged to have "People Up for Commem."

The Oxford Act, which should have been an annual function, was only occasionally held in the eighteenth century: Hearne complains of the irregularity. There was no Act in 1725: commenting on which Hearne writes: "All Discipline of the University, I fear, will quite sink in time. 'Tis the Exercise at the Act, and the Lectures that are to be read, and other Scholastic business that is to be done, that is the true reason that Acts are neglected, whatever other reasons are commonly pretended." There were several Acts in the first decade. In 1704 "Comitia Philologica" were held in January, with the special purpose of expressing the University's congratulations on recent victories. Marlborough is of course the great hero: to him "Omnis debetur Apollo": he is apostrophised as "Ingens Stator Imperii, Tutela labantis Europæ et sævis Ultor metuende Tyrannis"! Then followed in 1713 a great occasion, described as "Comitia in Honorem Annæ Pacificæ"; an inordinate number of English and Latin verses were recited, containing much fulsome flattery of good Queen Anne—

> "Where, Mighty Anna, shall thy Glorys end?
> Thou great Composer of distracted States!"

So sings Mr. Joseph Trapp, Professor of Poetry,—and, as was to be expected at a ceremony held in

honour of the Peace, a good deal about "Ormondus Imperator" and very little about Marlborough. After this, perhaps in consequence of the outrageous improprieties of the *Terræ Filius*, of whom more anon, there was an interruption of twenty years, and the ceremony emerges in 1733—a year, according to an authority quoted by Mr. Wordsworth, "rendered remarkable in the literary world by the brilliancy of the Public Act at Oxford." It was no doubt an important revival, and the details have been preserved. On the first day, July 5th, "about 5 o'clock" (we are told) "the great Mr. Handel shew'd away with his *Esther*, an Oratorio, or Sacred Drama, to a very numerous audience, at 5/– a ticket." Hearne, that stalwart enemy of all innovations, sneers at one *Handel*, a foreigner, who sells his worthless book for an exorbitant sum. It was at this performance, and the repetition of it on the following days, that Mr. Walter Powel, the Superior Beadle of Divinity, sang all alone with the musicians. On the next day no less than twenty-seven prose and verse pieces were recited in the Theatre, on a great variety of subjects: a Dialogue between "Bellus Homo" and "Academicus": verses on the Orrery, and the Press: an Ode in Commendation of the True Magnificence of Mind. Our rude forefathers were men of endurance. Business began on 7th July with the "Vesperiæ," prescribed or perpetuated by the Laudian Statutes: when the

Inceptor Doctors in Theology, Law, Medicine, and Philosophy performed the exercise necessary for their degree in their respective schools. There were nine candidates for the Doctorate of Divinity: each was "opposed" by a D.D., to whom the Vice-Chancellor had given at least twelve weeks' notice: whatever may be said of other degrees, the Doctor of Divinity's disputation was not reckoned a mere formality. Meanwhile the Inceptors in Arts (*i.e.* Bachelors proceeding to the degree of Master) performed their exercises in the Theatre. Here, "the Senior Proctor disputed upon the three last questions, and confirmed his argument upon the first, with an Inceptor Master, the Junior of the Act, who was Respondent, in the Rostrum, facing the Vice-Chancellor. Then a Pro-Proctor disputed (as should a *Terræ Filius* too) upon the second. And the Junior Proctor upon the last." The disputations lasted from one to five o'clock: except those for the degree of D.D., which went on till between six and seven.

There were more exercises on July 9th (the "Comitia"), degrees were conferred, and the Act was closed by a "handsome speech" from the Vice-Chancellor. But though the ceremonies were formally concluded, *ad eundem* degrees were granted on the following day to some Cambridge visitors, and on July 11th honorary D.C.L.'s were conferred on various distinguished persons in the

Theatre. On the same occasion the Rev. Father Pierre François le Courayer, late Canon Regular and Librarian of Ste. Geneviève in Paris, made a speech thanking the University of Oxford for a "D.D. by diploma" granted to him six years before. He had defended the validity of English ordinations, and the succession of Bishops in the Church of England.

No subsequent "Act" (if any was held) appears to have deserved a detailed record: and some years later the Encænia or Commemoration, as at present established, took the place of the older ceremony. It was only a change of date: in procedure the traditions were preserved. Thus in 1750 there was the same agreeable combination of music (the present organ-playing at the Encænia continues the custom), speeches, and honorary degrees: "the theatre was quite full," says the *Gentleman's Magazine*, "a very handsome appearance of ladies: and the whole was conducted with great decorum." There is an engraving of 1761 which represents this or some such occasion. The galleries are crowded with men only, ladies and strangers are in the area. According to a poet of 1693,

> "For Doctors, Masters, Ladies, Fiddles
> The gall'ries are reserved: the Middle's
> Left open for the mere Rascality,
> Servitors, and Promiscuous Quality."

In 1763 Commemoration was made the occasion for the University to signify its approval of the

policy of Government in the negotiations for the Peace of Paris; and it was a convenient opportunity, no doubt, to emphasise the fact that Oxford was no longer in opposition, but now and henceforth to be reckoned among the loyal supporters of the House of Hanover. The Chancellor was present. Solemn academic festivities continued for the space of four days; speeches were delivered in English and Latin, and many honorary degrees conferred. It was a highly aristocratic occasion: the University, which loved a lord, was proud to show off the polite accomplishments of its budding dukes and earls. On Wednesday, after no less than sixty honorary D.C.L.'s had been conferred at the Encænia, "the duke of Beaufort rose up in the rostrum on the right hand and spoke a copy of English verses with a noble gracefulness and propriety. After him the earl of Anglesey . . . spoke some English verses in a very distinct manner, which was graced by a sweet youthful modesty. Lord Robt. Spencer, the third speaker, pronounced a Latin oration with bold energy and great propriety of gesture." One can imagine the enthusiastic applause of the Hugbys and Crumps of those days, and the gratification of a genteel audience which realised that its Universities were homes of sound learning after all,—in spite of envious detractors. The *Oxford Journal* comments on the splendour of the company on this occasion, the propriety of elocution as well as action in

most of the speakers, together with that harmony and decorum with which the whole ceremony was conducted. These, says the *Journal*, reflect a lasting honour on the University. All the speeches and verses were in honour of the peace. Nor was music wanting,—then as always a great feature of Commemoration. "Between every three or four speeches the musick made a short interval," and in the afternoon "the company were detained from 3 to 8, hearing that absurd composition *Acis and Galatea*." And "on Thursday evening the oratorio of *Judas Maccabeus*, and on Friday evening that of the *Messiah*, were performed to a crowded and genteel audience."

It is noteworthy that the custom of reciting verses appropriate to the occasion survived as late as 1870. At the first Encænia after Lord Salisbury's installation as Chancellor, poets (not only prize-winners but others) were invited to declaim compositions of their own in the Theatre: and the invitation was accepted, although the ordeal of facing the disorderly gallery of forty years ago must have been somewhat trying.

The touch of buffoonery which provided a sort of "comic relief" for severe academic functions was till recent years supplied by the undergraduate spectators in the gallery. They were the legitimate successors of that chartered libertine, the *Terræ Filius*, who plays an important part in the history of the "Act." The proper and original function of

Terræ Filii appears to have been far different from their later vocation. They were a real part of the machinery of "inception," playing a statutory rôle in the disputations of would-be Masters of Arts, as we have seen: dealing, one may suppose, with grave questions in a somewhat lighter vein, and representing the layman, the Philistine, not unready to make a jest of the high and subtle speculations of philosophers: "raillying upon the questions," according to Evelyn, who witnessed the Act of 1669, and deplores the decay of manners, which permitted the "Universitie Buffoone" to "entertain the auditorie with a tedious, abusive, sarcastical rhapsodie, most unbecoming the gravity of the Universitie." Restoration licence corrupted the manners of the *Terræ Filius*: instead of "raising a serious and manly Mirth by exposing the false Reasonings of the Heretick," he took to "being arch upon all that was Grave, and waggish upon the Ladies." In the early years of the eighteenth century the *Terræ Filius* is a gross and indecent satirist of the alleged grossness and indecency of academic dignitaries, who fear but dare not suppress him: a necessary part of the ceremony, so necessary, in fact, that apparently the only way to escape him is to suppress the Act itself. Only the most charitable euphemism can describe his preserved speeches as "arch" and "waggish." With all allowance made for the larger tolerance of a coarse and cynical epoch,—even in an age of "common sense,"

when every one gets credit for the worst motives,—it is almost incredible that any decent audience could have listened to him. Yet he seems to have been very popular. "I love an *Oxford Terræ Filius*" (says Squire Calf in the play of *An Act at Oxford*) "better than *Merry Andrew* in *Leicester Fields*." The *Terræ Filius* speeches of 1713 and 1733, which have survived to the present day, are often indecent, and always outrageously and grossly personal. Heads and Fellows of Colleges are their special victims. Much of the still printable part of the 1713 oration is directed against Dr. Lancaster, Provost of Queen's, the "Northern Bear" of Hearne's *Diary*: the attack gives a fair idea of the kind of composition which seems to have been in vogue—jerky, staccato, a medley of English and Latin, passing abruptly from one subject to another.

"*Proximus mihi occurrit* Slyboots. And he Good Man too has been barbarously used: never did Poor Man take more pains to be a Bishop than he has done, almost as much as his neighbour the Vice-Chancellor (Dr. Gardiner of All Souls') did to be Queen's Chaplain: *At Diis aliter visum est.* But no one can say it was his fault." "He has trimmed and turned with all Parties—Tory in London, Whig at Woodstock." Then, dropping easily into verse, the orator continues:

> "Of him some Poet thus hath sung
> (For none are safe from a Malicious tongue),—

> From Northern Climes Old Slyboots came,
> And much hath added to his country's fame.
> A Master in all sorts of Evil,
> He'll outlye Ayliffe, or the Devil:
> . . . . . .
> For Learning Slyboots ne'er had any,
> But Plots and Principles full many."

It is not surprising that there was no *Terræ Filius* —and, apparently as a consequence, no Act— between 1713 and 1733. But twenty years did nothing to reform the "Academick Buffoone": in 1733 he was, if possible, more scurrilous than before, —feeling probably that opportunities for ribaldry were rare, and should be utilised accordingly. His theme was, as usual, the delinquencies of the Don: hardly any College escaped his lash. Those in authority were for the most part gluttons or loose livers. The Bishop of Oxford is addressed with pleasing directness as a Mitred Hog. All Souls' is the "Collegium Omnium Animalium," where they take more care of their bodies than they do of their souls. The Fellows of Trinity are "Barrell-gutted," and if a man wants to personate a Fellow of Brasenose he must wear a pillow for a stomach. Jesus (where, according to Shepilinda, every one is a gentleman born) is the home of the brutal athlete, —"here are your Heroes that vanquish Bargemen," whereby it appears that the heroic figure of "Jones of Jesus," whose prowess and physical strength was turned into a mere myth by the incredulous wits of the nineteenth century, had really some historical

basis. At Magdalen, presided over by "the great Hurlothrumbo" (Edward Butler), Fellows were married, or worse. "Here you may see *Little Brats* every morning at the Buttery Hatch, calling for hot Loaves and Butter in their Papa's name:" and here was "the ingenious Mr. ——, who some Time ago resigned his Fellowship in favour of his eldest Son." These scurrilities are not history: undergraduate satire cannot be taken as a picture of manners. They only serve to illustrate the remarkable taste of the period: for it may be noted that the *Terræ Filius*' speech of 1733 attained at least to a fourth edition. Thirty years later, Oxford had become more polite: and although it was feared that the elaborate ceremonial of 1763 would be marred by a renewal of indecency, nothing happened to interrupt the decorous elegance of the Festival. There was a *Terræ Filius*: but the traditions of his office were not preserved: he appeared in the form of a short series of social satires, quite decent but wholly uninteresting. Forty years earlier, Nicholas Amherst had called his satirical attacks on manners and authority, *Terræ Filius*, on the same principle. These papers must of course not be confused with the actual speeches composed for delivery in the Theatre: to which they stand in the same relations as "Punch" to its namesake, the drama of the street.

VIII

REFORMS AND REFORMERS

IT is a commonplace with modern writers to describe eighteenth century Oxford as a place of torpor and indifference to reform—a convenient and picturesque generalisation, not (it must be admitted) without some foundation of fact: in the years following the Restoration the University is represented as having folded her hands and composed herself to a slumber which was only broken about a hundred and fifty years later,—a state of moral and intellectual coma agreeably described by one College historian as an "euthanasia." That is a phrase which is gratifying to our own consciousness of superior virtue and higher ideals: and to a certain extent it describes the situation justly enough: yet it should not be forgotten that torpor and apathy were very far from being the prevailing characteristics of the first quarter of the eighteenth century. It was not till after a period of storm and stress that Oxford entered on that age of indifference to reforms which lasted till the French Revolution, left enduring traces on the academic life of the first

half of the nineteenth century, and only passed away in the throes of two movements, one religious and one educational, which belong to modern history.

All ages in the life of vigorous communities are periods of transition: only in some the process of change is more obviously visible than in others. The Oxford of William III. and Anne was emphatically passing through a "transitional" phase: nor was the University unconscious of the fact. The best of those who concerned themselves at all with academic matters recognised fully that the University, and more especially the College, system was confronted by circumstances and a state of society for which it was not properly equipped. It is the common academic problem: and Universities are then least successful when they think that they have definitely solved it. Statutes which were perfectly suited to the social conditions of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were ill adapted, if observed only in the letter and not in the spirit, to those of the eighteenth. The civil disunion of the past fifty years had troubled all waters. The part played by Oxford in the Civil War had unsettled the academic mind. The laxity of the Restoration, accompanied and succeeded by a period of religious indifferentism (which most eighteenth century moralists seem to associate with vicious conduct), had had its full share, *teste* Anthony Wood, in depraving the moral tone

of the University. All kinds of abuses were rampant among undergraduates and Fellows alike: "the genius of this age," says Humphry Prideaux in 1695, "is run into libertinism, and the Universities have drunk too deep of it." For active vice, there is no part of the maligned eighteenth century which can compare with the later years of the seventeenth. Moreover, after the Revolution, new prospects were opening outside the University. Within and without, ideals of comfort and luxury were developing which were unknown to the Don of an earlier day: and above all, the dangers and vicissitudes to which Fellows had recently been exposed inclined them and their successors more and more to take full advantage of a period of tranquillity and undisturbed possession of collegiate emoluments. However much the best Oxonians may have wished to restore the old studiousness and simplicity of life, the circumstances of the time were too strong for them.

The schemes of University reform proposed under Anne and George I. combine the two obvious courses of enforcing obedience to old statutes and framing new ones. Party spirit is at the root of them, as it is at the root of all the life of that age of partisanship: and this is quite openly acknowledged by their authors, to whom national salvation means the ascendency of a political or religious faction. The question for Lord Macclesfield is how best the Universities can be pressed into

the service of the existing Government. Dean Prideaux' primary object is to make Oxford and Cambridge bulwarks of the established Church. "Atheists, Deists, Socinians, Arians, Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists, and other Adversaries and Sectaries, surround us on every side, and are set, as in battle array, against us: and if we do not come armed and provided with equal knowledge and learning to the conflict, how shall we be able to support our Cause against them?" Prideaux' recommendations for the better government of Oxford and Cambridge are of the most miscellaneous and comprehensive kind. He is concerned with small details of discipline such as the closing and locking of common-rooms at ten p.m., and punishing persons who climb over the College walls. He has conceived the Utopian idea of compelling undergraduates to pay cash to their tradesmen: debt and the accompanying dun, as we have seen, were among the chief embarrassments of a scholar's life. Tuition is supposed to be safeguarded by the institution of penalties for bad or neglectful tutors: Divinity examinations are to be strictly conducted. Such details as these belong to the province rather of the internal administrator than of the external reformer. The Dean is more original in his dealings with the Fellowship system, which is to be very drastically amended. He is the author of the notable scheme of compulsory retirement associated with the name of "Drone

Hall." No Fellows except the occupants of certain University offices are to hold their places for more than twenty years: non-residence under certain circumstances is to be permitted; this in the existing state of things would have been a great boon, but the public opinion of the time was strongly against it. No Fellowships are to exceed £60 a year. Elections to these places are to go by merit (a proviso showing a pathetic belief in the power of legislation): claims of "Founder's kin" are to be disregarded. So far most of Dean Prideaux' reforms may be admitted to be desirable in themselves. He is on more dangerous and debatable ground when he suggests that Government should delegate the perpetual supervision of the Universities to a standing commission of twenty curators, to be re-appointed with every new Parliament: a reform at which modern academic opinion would stand aghast: but it must be remembered that in 1715 State interference with Universities had been sanctioned by long-standing custom, and only resisted in extreme cases, as when James II. intruded a Roman Catholic President into Magdalen. Another clause proposes a select body of arbitrators, chosen from academic residents, to arbitrate in College disputes, "whereas Fellows of Colleges often spend a great part of their time as well as of their revenue in quarrels among themselves or with their Head": there was at that moment a bitter quarrel raging

between the Warden of All Souls' and most of his Fellows.

The beginning of the Hanoverian régime was naturally an opportune time for suggesting drastic innovations at the Universities, Oxford in particular. The idea of a Visitation was in the air: in 1717 a very violent Whig pamphlet calls for one, on the ground that the Church is corrupt, and the fault lies with the Universities. These learned societies, it is alleged, are "cages of unclean birds," homes of Jacobitism, and of perjury which makes Jacobitism easy. From swearing that you have attended lectures which have not even been delivered, it is only a step to breaking the oath of allegiance to your lawful king, George I. Here, as elsewhere, there is a clear case against the University. But the pamphleteer's motive is quite obviously political, not moral or educational at all: it is reasonably clear that if Oxonians had only been Whigs and not Tories they might have perjured themselves to their heart's content, and nothing said. Universities were to be reformed, if at all, for political reasons: it is these that make Lord Macclesfield a reformer, about 1718. Prideaux' aim had been to secure the Universities for the Church: Macclesfield wishes to "ease their present disaffection" and win them over to the Government. To serve this end he contemplates, like the Dean, a very large measure of State interference: Colleges are not to elect their own Heads, who are to be chosen by a body

of State officers, Archbishops, Bishops, and the Visitor: and even the right of electing to Fellowships, scholarships, and exhibitions is to be vested in a commission. Fellowships in Law and Physic are to be allowed: holders of other places who do not take Orders must vacate in ten years: no one may be a Fellow for more than twenty.

The motive power at the back of such proposals was party spirit: and partisan schemes originating outside the University (the prevailing temper of which was hardly likely to make Oxford active and sympathetic in the service of a Hanoverian government) were naturally encountered by bitter partisan opposition. Under such conditions reforms were not judged on their merits. Other and less wholesale academic changes were suggested from time to time, but did not pass beyond the stage of debate. The question of exempting Fellows from the necessity of taking Orders seems to have been mooted outside the University as early as 1709: "This" (says a writer quoted by the learned editor of Hearne's *Diary*) "is their damned way to pull the University in pieces, for by altering the least Statute is striking at the whole foundation." Whether for this rather ultra-conservative reason, or because, in the words of another writer, such an exemption must tend to the breeding of Sparks and Beaux instead of grave Divines, the bill for the repeal of statutes compelling Orders never came before Parliament. The delicate subject of matrimony for Fellows was hotly

debated at various periods both within and without the University. Some disapproved even of married Heads: "this Practice of Marriage," Hearne says, "is much to the Prejudice of Colleges, and is a very bad example to Young Men." The writer of a letter in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (1762) considers that "in regard to matrimony Fellows of Colleges are almost as useless to the State as an equal number of Monks would be": the "almost" is significant: it may be inferred that in some cases civic duty was combined with outward compliance with the College statutes. He can hold anything (said a later philosopher) who can hold his tongue. One need not take the scandals mentioned by a *Terræ Filius* too seriously: but Hearne notes in 1726 that a Dr. Bertie of All Souls', on vacating his Fellowship for a living *now acknowledges* his marriage. One reads, too, of Colleges conniving at matrimony. Twenty-eight years later the subject is again under discussion. A correspondent advocates the abolition of celibacy. He is opposed on the too probable ground that under a system of Married Fellows Fellowships would become hereditary.

Discussions outside the University had no serious effect. Practical results were much more likely to follow when Colleges themselves began to demand modifications of their statutes, as at All Souls' in the years between 1702 and 1720. The questions at issue were the problems of the period: Must the Fellow be still bound by statutes enacted

for different social conditions? Must he, if a graduate in Arts, be always compelled to take Orders? Did "study of the Common Law" or "service under the Crown" dispense him from residence in Oxford? Might he, in short, make some kind of career for himself, yet still remain a Fellow of All Souls'? These difficulties illustrate the searchings of heart which must have been felt by many foundations: and round them there raged for many years an acrimonious contest between the Fellows and their very pugnacious Warden, Dr. Gardiner, who fought, says the chronicler of All Souls', "like Athanasius *contra mundum*," defending his position with the vigour though not with the success of a Bentley. The struggle lasted almost till the death of the valiant Warden, who was defeated all along the line by the advocates of change: and "the College of Chichele's statutes, intended to be largely clerical, strictly residential, and devoted mainly to the promotion of theology, civil and canon law, now definitely emerges as a College preponderatingly lay, the jurists in which are largely absorbed by the study and practice of the Common Law, and the distinctive characteristic of whose members as a whole is non-residence,"—in short, the College as later history has known it.

That decency and good order which has characterised the conduct of College business for the last hundred years and more could not be attained in a moment. The first half of the

eighteenth century is an unquiet period in the annals of College government—a period of small tyrannies and petty jobberies, disputed and even scandalous elections. At an election to the mastership of Balliol in 1727, each of the two rival parties (neither of them guiltless of questionable arts) conceived itself to have statutably elected its own candidate: and the matter had to be decided eventually by the Visitor of the College. Similarly University College in 1722 was unfortunate in the possession of two Masters. One of them, Thomas Cockman, had "gained the day by a bare majority. A formal complaint being lodged with the Vice-Chancellor and Doctors that the election was contrary to statute, another was ordered, at which William Dennison" (the rival candidate) "presided. Here he was elected Master. . . . But Cockman had already been formally admitted." Nothing short of a royal visitation of the College could arrange the dispute. At Oriel there was a controversy more typical of the state of the times: Dr. Carter, the Provost, arrogated to himself the power (alleged to be statutory) of annulling elections to Fellowships by his own proper negative. "Dr. Carter" (Hearne writes in 1723) "is justly looked upon as a vile man and a sneaking hypocrite, which last name Mr. Dyer called him to his face lately, upon account of his most scandalous behaviour in an election of Fellows, when there were six electors to four. Yet the Provost would not allow that six

were more than four, but insisted upon a strangely unheard of negative voice, so as to make four carry the point against six, and the matter is now before the Visitor, to the great injury of the College." The Visitor supported the Provost. But at the next Fellowship election one of the candidates rejected by the Provost's negative vote brought an action against the College in the Court of Common Pleas: and the Court decided against the Provost's claim—an important judgment, since, as Hearne no doubt justly says, "had Carter succeeded, other Heads would have also insisted upon a negative, and then there would have been an end of all elections": both the University and the Colleges were already ruled by tyrannies and close oligarchies. It was not only ambitious Heads who wished to be unquestioned monarchs of their own societies: one hears of Visitors "aiming at a tyranny"—as at All Souls', where an indignant Fellow protests against the unconstitutional action of a Visitor who "riots in the vitals of the College." Such misuses and extensions of power would be natural where the status of Colleges had been not long ago violently disturbed, and where they were still battlegrounds for partisan feeling. The ideas which caused the dispute between Dr. Gardiner and his Fellows, if other Colleges did not exactly pass through the same period of storm and stress, must nevertheless have affected the state of most foundations: and led, if not to repeal of existing statutes, yet to evasion or lax

interpretation — convenient safety-valves for contemporary discontent. Internal strife was doubtless often allayed by compromise: and Governments naturally grew less careful about the state of Universities as the Hanoverian dynasty, to which Oxford at least had been bitterly hostile, became more stable and secure. Pressure from without and within being thus gradually lightened, the natural result followed: whether or not it be true to say (as Dr. Fowler does) that the reign of George II. probably marks the nadir both of attainment and discipline in Oxford, the University sank after 1730 or thereabouts into a quiescence which lasted for some decades, and has caused the whole century to be branded with the stigma of moral and intellectual torpor. That accusation is too sweeping. Schemes of reform of the College system, as has been seen, were mooted in the earlier part of the century: and the activity of several Heads of Houses, according to their lights, would have done credit to any age.

Christ Church prospered greatly under the rule of the gifted Dr. Aldrich (logician, chemist, historian, and musician), and the *mitis sapientia* of Dr. Smalridge: and Atterbury, whose short reign of two years intervened between the two, while his tyrannical disposition is said to have caused much internal discord in his House, is allowed to have been zealous in the cause of study. Hearne certainly calls Smalridge a "Sneaker": but that

is doubtless because his "Honesty" was less conspicuous than that of his immediate predecessor. The career of Dr. Arthur Charlett, Master of University from 1692 to 1722, may be taken as illustrating the activities and difficulties of contemporary Heads. He was an energetic ruler,—perhaps over-energetic,—confronted, like the Warden of All Souls', with occasional disaffection and even rebellion among his Fellows: keenly sensitive withal to the necessity of standing well with successive Governments, Tory and Whig: and accomplishing the difficult task of trimming his sails to suit the political temper of the moment with only moderate success. He enjoyed the doubtful privilege of an intimate acquaintanceship with Hearne, whose *Diary* is full of notices of Charlett. Hearne had no consideration whatever for the arduous task of a dignitary who very naturally was anxious "whatsoever king should reign" still to be Master of University,—if not more. The position of a prominent Head was no bed of roses. Charlett, for all his timeserving, got but little preferment from the Tories, and was soundly rated by the Whigs: Hearne meanwhile dining with him, drinking his wine and blackening his character as that of a "malicious invidious prevaricator": and cynically chronicling in the *Diary* how Dr. Charlett, on the rumour of a "Visitation" of the University, had at once written to Lord Arran to assure him of the continued loyalty of University College to the

House of Hanover. It has to be remembered that whatever amicable relations may at one time have subsisted between the Master and the diarist (though from the first Hearne seems never to have really trusted Charlett, whom he calls a man of a strange Rambling Head), in later years even the pretence of friendship must have been dropped, when that too "honest" sub-librarian of the Bodleian was practically deprived of his office,—a misfortune for which he held the "malicious invidious prevaricator" jointly responsible with Dr. Gardiner of All Souls' and Dr. Lancaster of Queen's. Nevertheless when all is said and done, Charlett stands out as one of the vigorous Heads of the period. He was a strict disciplinarian: and if he was overbearing and arrogant,—"rude to common men, yet honeying at the whisper" of "The Great" (perhaps with more reason than some of the moderns), yet his rule made on the whole for good government and order. Dr. Lancaster of Queen's (a strong Whig, and therefore described by Hearne as "that old Knave, Dr. Lancaster," but by Tickell, a Whig and a Queen's man

> "—Lancaster, adorn'd with every grace,
> The chief in merit as the chief in place")

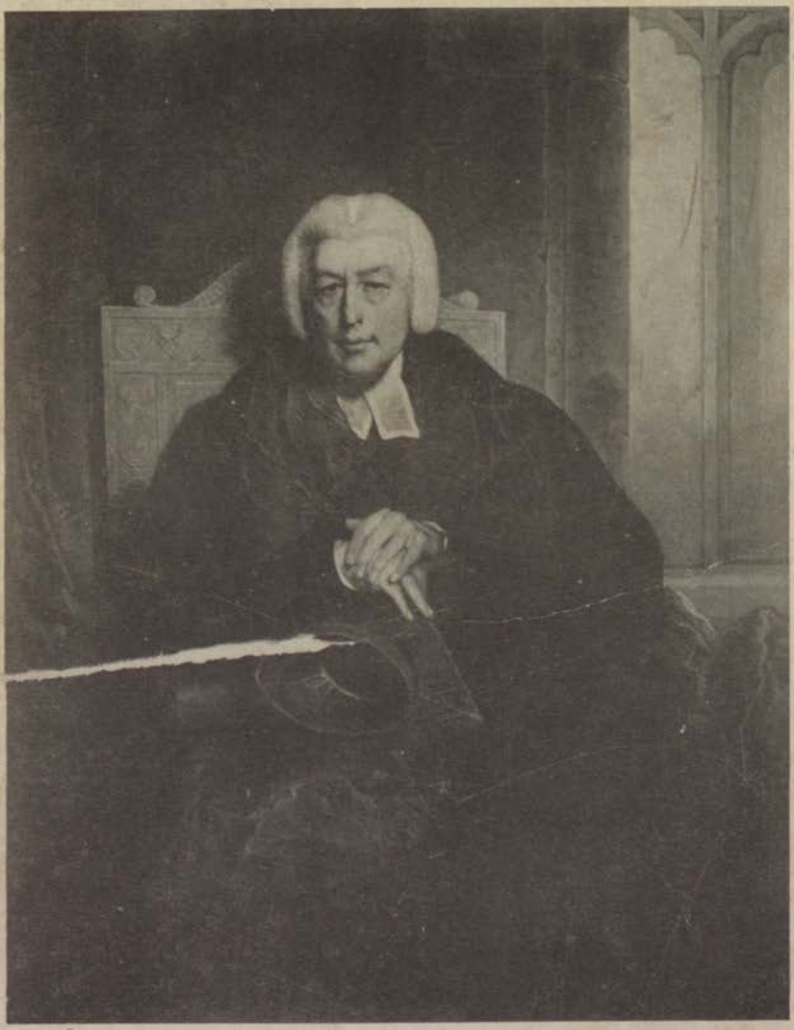
appears to have been a vigorous Head: and the fault of Dr. Newton's projected scheme of a reformed Hart Hall or Hertford College was only that it was too elaborate and too drastic for his age.

If there were crying evils, there were, till 1730 or so, at least, individual authorities who recognised the fault and did their best to grapple with it. But there were mischiefs too deep-seated to be eradicated by individual attempts to compel good behaviour here and there. The motive to violent change passed with the altered attitude of Government towards the Universities: and as it had never been backed, so it was not succeeded, by any general movement towards higher academic ideals. These, in the partisan strife and practical continuation of the Civil War which raged in Oxford nearly as long as there was a Jacobite cause to fight for, had not much time to develop. Such stimulants to study as Oxford has from time to time found in the temper or the circumstances of the time, were unfortunately not present in the middle of the eighteenth century. In the later Middle Ages success at the University had often been considered a primary qualification for the public service: academic exercises were a direct preparation for the minister and the diplomat. Later, the ardour of the Renaissance had not failed to re-invigorate the English Universities. But study had now lost its direct and practical utility: the student zeal of the spacious times of great Elizabeth had long ago burnt itself out: and the sceptical spirit of the Hanoverian age was not likely to be seriously moved by the regulations of Laud,—indeed, the Laudian Statutes had never

been remarkably successful in reconstituting University studies.

But out of the torpor of this certainly inactive period a better state of Collegiate life and a better kind of *socius*—less concerned with national politics and internal squabbles, more zealous for good government and education—gradually emerges. Whatever abuses remain unhealed in the system, the ideals of resident Oxonians do certainly change for the better as the middle of the century passes. Oxford has the name of moving very slowly: and it is true that alterations are apt to be postponed for some time after the more progressive spirits of the age have begun to demand them: but once begun her progress is apt to be not gradual but rapid. So it is that towards the end of the eighteenth century, while the University is torpid, College life has immensely changed: and one can imagine that there was nearly as wide a gulf of division between the average resident Fellows of 1720 and of 1780 as between the Don of the Oxford Movement and his successor of the recent eighties and nineties. The tone and temper of Oxford life has undergone an entire reconstruction. We have exchanged the days of Charlett and Gardiner for the age of Cyril Jackson: at the beginning of George I.'s reign the *animus* of Oxford is still that of the Civil War: in the early days of the French Revolution we are in the beginnings of modern Oxford. Learning, according to Gibbon, has become not

only agreeable but even fashionable towards the close of the century. The historian is writing with especial reference to Christ Church under the rule of "the great" Cyril Jackson: and if Charlett and Gardiner and Smalridge and Lancaster may serve as types of the "Queen Anne" and very early Georgian Heads—trimmers and timeservers by stern necessity, aiming at and sometimes obtaining a preferment which might remove them from the difficult duty of governing a turbulent College, but was as often as not held conjointly with the Headship—Cyril Jackson is the best representative of the College dignitary of George III.'s reign. During the twenty-six years—1783 to 1809—for which he ruled "the House" he accepted no preferment, but devoted "those incommunicable gifts which go to make a great ruler" to the good government of his society. "Our greatest Deans," writes the historian of Christ Church, "have assuredly been those who have been content to dedicate their best powers simply and unreservedly to the service of their House. And this was emphatically the case with Cyril Jackson." Under such Heads Oxford stands apart and aloof from political faction. She is the educator of statesmen, not the tool of parties. With Colleges at least proposing to themselves better ideals and endeavouring to secure their better attainment by the institution of rational examinations, the first half of the nineteenth century begins: a period which may



CYRIL JACKSON

FROM AN ENGRAVING BY CHAS. TURNER AFTER THE PAINTING BY WM. OWEN, R.A.

have been marked by many academic scandals (as we have learnt to consider them) but which, at least for resident Oxonians, was full of a healthy intellectual and physical life.

In one fashion or another, by reform or compromise or evasion, Colleges did, after much wrangling, settle down eventually into a decent and well-ordered quietude,—which at least had this advantage for a later day, that would-be academic reformers were not as a rule obviously and necessarily pre-occupied (as in earlier days they would have been) by the squabbles of their own Hall and Common-room. Meantime for two-thirds of the century Oxford had rest from University (as distinct from College) legislation. The list of additions to the Statute-Book during that period is strangely meagre: and the most important publicly conducted business must have been the periodical meetings of Congregation to confer degrees—meetings which, as has been seen, were held far more frequently than at present, and which in the conditions of the time must have been often enlivened by a good deal of human interest. But all activity does not belong exclusively to the nineteenth century. After the first half of the eighteenth, the University began to take a quite modern interest in the working of its own machinery. In 1758 much discussion appears to have arisen out of the terms of Mr. Viner's will, appointing a Professor and indicating his duties.

The eighteenth century was as prolific of "Short Remarks," "Replies to Short Remarks," "Examination of Replies to some Short Remarks," "The Examiner Examined," and so forth, as our own enlightened age: and while the interpretation of the will appears to have been settled after the usual paper war in 1758, other questions—such as the right of Convocation to alter Statutes, and the title of certain persons to vote as members of Convocation on the election of a Chancellor—seem to have grown out of it. One begins to notice the "country voter" as a factor in academic politics,—brought into closer touch with his University no doubt by increased facilities of communication as the roads improved and "Flying Machines" multiplied.

> "'Tis so! . . . some horrid plot is brewing .
> No less than Alma Mater's Ruin.
> Now fly to ev'ry Whig and Tory
> The hastening letter circ'latory:
> Come up by such a day *per fidem*,
> And shew that you are *semper idem*.
>
> "Each honest Parson leaves his Hay,
> And whips in ere the voting Day:
> Curates and Rectors, Masters, Doctors,
> And all who can defy the Proctors."

Ten or twelve years later, reform was in the air. The University began to feel the influences of the time and even to consider the necessity of putting its house in order. We have seen that a statute of this time regulated academic dress: and

if noblemen were adorned with gold-tasselled caps, another statute (of 1772) forbade them and their friends to indulge in the two favourite sports of the age, "forasmuch as the unbridled and deadly love of games for a monied stake has in some measure made inroads upon the University itself, whereby the fame and reputation of the University may be stained, from the hearts of the young men being set upon horse-racing and cock-fighting." This is merely good government. But in 1773 the publication of Napleton's pamphlet, above mentioned, indicated the existence of a general feeling that University examinations ought to be made more serious: and the Examination Statute, which laid down the lines of the system under which we live, took shape ultimately in 1800. There were also clear indications that Oxford was realising the existence of a Zeitgeist. In 1772 "the matriculation test of subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles at Oxford was discussed in the House of Commons": and although "only a minority of the members were found to be favourable to a more liberal system," still the fact that such a question could be discussed, and that the Solicitor-General could hint at "parliamentary cognisance" in case the Universities did not reform themselves, seems to have given the University of Oxford cause for serious reflection. Was it not better, caution suggested, to "fling wide the gates to those who else would enter through the breach"? A war of

"leaflets" was waged in 1772–3: the controversy followed the lines with which later academic agitations have made us only too familiar. Timid counsellors argue, "It is a good maxim, *Noli quieta turbare*: but the signal is already given and the cry for Alteration is gone forth: the question is, whether we choose to capitulate, making our own terms, or to surrender at discretion." To which stalwart conservatism replies, "But the Torrent may possibly be diverted from its present course: or it may in time subside, if we prudently support our fences. . . . Shall this University, the mirror of constancy and steadfast virtue, tremble at the cry of Alteration, and think of adopting the timid maxim of 'lopping off a limb to save the body'?" Also, Cambridge is firm. One would think they were discussing Women's Degrees, or Compulsory Greek. It would be unjust to accuse Oxonians of that day of a dangerous liberalism. Fear was the parent of policy. Reform proposed (confessedly as a sop to public opinion) only some alteration,—possibly a "Declaration of Acquiescence" rather than actual subscription,—which would be a little less manifestly absurd than making boys of sixteen subscribe what their fathers (as Lord John Cavendish had said in Parliament) could not understand at sixty: and neither reformers nor conservatives wished to extend the *clientèle* of the University: both agreed upon the necessity of excluding Roman Catholics and Dissenters. In the event tests remained as

they were: and the "stalwarts'" belief in the improbability of parliamentary interference was justified. Presently the liberal ideas of England in general were rudely checked by the excesses of the French Revolution: and for many years the country had other things to think of than the state of its Universities.

IX

POLITICS AND PERSECUTIONS

THERE are very few periods in English history which can compare with the Revolution and the reign of Anne for tortuous and bewildering political complications. Causes and effects are mixed together: and what should be causes do not produce the effects which ought in all reason to correspond. It is very seldom so difficult for historians to draw a clear, reasonable, and logically satisfying picture. The principles of the Revolution were undoubtedly not the principles of the majority of Englishmen: yet the Revolution happened. The Elector of Hanover was not the chosen of the English nation. Yet the Elector of Hanover succeeded to the throne without a blow being struck for his rival. Nor were these events due to political apathy. Seldom has the country in general taken so much interest in politics: partisanship perhaps was never so bitter in English history. During the later years of William's and throughout Anne's reign Whigs and Tories battled continuously for the mastery, neither side shrinking from any

expedient, however questionable, which should gain it at least a momentary triumph. Politics were a game, where the rules of fair play were remarkably lax, and where individual players occasionally changed sides. Very unexpected things happened —unexpected to us who associate Whiggism with a "Liberal" and Toryism with a "Conservative" policy: Whigs made wars, Tories made peace: Whigs were for a Continental, Tories for an insular policy: the Whig was a Protectionist, the Tory a Free-Trader. But the question which lies on the surface is of course this—Why, England being on the whole Tory in sentiment, were Whig principles not only ultimately victorious, but (apparently) regarded throughout the kaleidoscopic changes of the period as the only safe side in politics? How was it that a Tory Minister, backed by a Tory national sentiment, being in power, the Whigs succeeded without bloodshed in setting George I. on the throne, and banishing Toryism from a share in the government of the country for forty years? These are among the surprises of a period when many things fell out contrary to expectation.

In the chaos of conflicting causes the general reader can discern two predominant factors: the mutual hatred between Whigs and Tories: and the fear, common to both parties alike, of Roman Catholicism. Bitter party feeling solidified the Whigs as against the Tories, and would have united

the Tories against the Whigs had it not been that no Tory had a really definite programme of action, in respect of the succession to the throne of England. But the followers of Harley and St. John were divided in sentiment and allegiance. They, as much as the Whigs, respected the Act of Settlement: they, more than the Whigs, were vowed to the defence of the English Church: as long, therefore, as the Pretender remained a Roman Catholic,—and it is infinitely creditable to him that he never seems to have considered that the English crown *valait bien une messe*—no Tory could be a Jacobite, consistently with his avowed principles. The course of the Whig was clear: the Tory was confronted by an obvious dilemma. Hence the party of Somers and Shrewsbury, representing a minority in the country and the House of Commons, was strong, united, and decisive in action: while Oxford and Bolingbroke, with a Parliamentary and national majority at their back, wavered, hesitated, and lost. After all, it is active minorities that make revolutions.

The University of Oxford has often been blamed for its devotion to causes which (as it is alleged) real enlightenment would have recognised as doomed to failure from the first: an unfortunate habit of loyalty which is easily traced to a merely unintelligent conservatism and hatred of change. Perhaps in the middle years of the eighteenth century Oxonians were guilty of some lack of

political insight, and clung to a cause which was practically extinct. But certainly this is not true of the Oxford of the two decades following the Revolution. That change was brought about by the decisive action of a minority which had made up its mind,—a minority of which the leaders were a powerful section of the nobility, and the rank and file the population of most of the large English towns. The Tory forces, on the other hand, were recruited from the ranks of the lower clergy, and the country squirearchy. In respect of voting power, these classes represented the majority of Englishmen: these were the defenders of "High Church" principles and the divine right of kings: and Oxford was closely associated with both the clergy and the squirearchy. The University was then, as for a century and a half afterwards, governed by and for the Church. Colleges were ruled by clerical opinion, and Fellowships were the road to ecclesiastical preferment. Rank and wealth were of course represented: but most of the families which sent their sons to Oxford belonged to the half-farmer, half-squire class, which was still very numerous though already decreasing: a class not very accessible to new ideas, but conservative and insular by instinct and tradition, suspicious of novelties and contemptuous of "enthusiasts," inspired, like the old-fashioned Greeks, by a true and genuine hatred of foreigners,—in short, a class essentially British. These were the "old country

putts," whom Amherst describes as ridiculed by their more fashionable sons: and who were destined in the progress of the years either to rise into the state of "gentlemen" or sink into that of small farmers. In the early century, then, Oxford represented at least the inferior ranks of the clergy, and the rustic layman: and in representing these it represented England, and was for a time at least truly national: for Toryism was the national spirit. No doubt there was much Jacobite sentiment in the University. It could not be otherwise. When Royalty visited Dr. Routh at Magdalen a century later and saw the portrait of Prince Rupert in the Hall, it commented on the fact that Oxford was apparently "fond of the old family still." "The old family" was bound by too many ties of sentiment to what had been its capital for a time to be lightly forgotten: and if the relations between the Stuarts and the University, or at least a College here and there, had been occasionally strained, yet the mistakes of James II. did not blot out the memory of Charles I. There was a special and personal link between Oxford and the Stuart dynasty: Jacobitism would have died harder on the banks of Isis than elsewhere: but apart from this, if Oxford was for the most part Jacobite, it was for the same reason that every Tory was more or less a Jacobite in the later years of Queen Anne's reign,—simply because part of the Whig programme was the succession of the Elector

of Hanover, and to be a Whig was to be the enemy of Crown and Church:

> "The Crown is tack'd unto the Church,
> The Church unto the Crown,
> The Whigs are slightly tack'd to both,
> And so must soon go down."

The political opinions of a University are not in these days a matter of very grave anxiety to Governments, Liberal or Conservative. Academical teachers are miscellaneous in their political leanings, and moreover have other fish to fry, in this strenuous age, than the training of budding Radicals or incipient Unionists. The proportion of University-trained members of Parliament (in the lower House at least) is not very large. Even if it were, the trend of thought in so many seats of learning as we at present possess is by no means consistent and uniform: the influences of teachers neutralise each other: and when one University is dangerously progressive, Ministers can console themselves by the reflection that another is perilously reactionary. But when Oxford and Cambridge stood practically alone in England, and between them represented such Higher Education as the country possessed, their relation to the Government of the country was very different: and it was really a matter of grave importance that Oxford was the Jacobite capital, the very Mecca of Toryism. London and the two Universities were the effective seminaries for politicians. In

point of size and general importance, the city of Oxford bulked much larger among English towns than it does now. Religious and ecclesiastical controversy entered very largely into the party questions of the early eighteenth century: and Colleges bred ecclesiastical controversialists: if the pulpits were to be "tuned," the best means to that end was to tune the Universities. If the newspaper press was not as yet very important as a disseminator of opinions, yet it was an age of pamphleteering, and educated partisans were much in demand. It was fully recognised that academic support was likely to be very useful to the Government of the day: witness such schemes as that proposed by Prideaux, the main object of which was to make Fellows of Colleges serviceable instruments of the powers that be. Altogether, Oxford—always at that period regarded as much more closely in touch with public affairs than Cambridge—was very much before the eyes of the country: and the doings of University authorities were matters of really national importance. Leading Dons—more especially, Heads of Houses—were placed in a position of some embarrassment. They had much to gain and much to lose. Most of them wanted preferment. Bishoprics and deaneries were the rewards of party loyalty: but uncompromising loyalty was dangerous, in the continual and rapid fluctuations of political power, and might even lead to violent State interference: the

episode of Magdalen College and James II. was only the last of a series of deprivations and expulsions and forced elections. Under the circumstances, if the policy of many Heads was that of the Vicar of Bray, the uncertainty of the political outlook during Anne's reign is surely ample justification. If they were Whigs, their course might be comparatively clear: but if Tories (and most were Tories by instinct) they could not, being Churchmen, but be hampered by the illogicality of the situation. Hearne complains that Tories in Oxford were waverers. No one knew what might happen when the Queen should die: and if some, like Dr. Lancaster of Queen's, according to satire, were "Tories in London, Whigs at Woodstock" (and it must be allowed that the vicinity of Blenheim hardly made for political stability), it is of course easy to brand them as mere selfish timeservers: yet, after all, learning does not flourish in an atmosphere of expulsions and intrusions, and charity may give the sadly harassed Don some credit for consulting the best interests of his College and University by taking the course best calculated to lead to a quiet life.

But they got no credit from the contemporary diarist. Himself the bitterest of partisans—as sound a Tory as Macaulay was a Whig—Hearne had about equal consideration for professed opponents and timeserving dignitaries. That fine, healthy spirit of intolerance, which dubbed the Tory Croker

"a bad, a very bad man," still animates the "Hypobibliothecarius" when he characterises a Whig. No one in the opposite camp can be a good man, or even a good writer. Milton himself is classed with "such other Republican Rascals." Contemporary divines fare but ill: Hoadly is "that infamous and Scandalous Advocate for Rebellion": Burnet, being of "Republican, Presbyterian Principles," "has but very little skill in either Prophane or Sacred Antiquity, much like the Generality of the Low Church Herd." But timorous and timeserving friends are as bad as open enemies, or worse. Arthur Charlett, the Master of University, was one of these: he offered himself as bail for Sacheverell at the latter's trial, and was eager to profess his eternal loyalty to the House of Hanover a few years later: under circumstances like these no one who enjoyed the privilege of Hearne's society — and Charlett and Hearne were, in a manner, intimates, although the intimacy seems to have been one long series of *amantium iræ* without the *redintegratio amoris*—could avoid a good deal of plain criticism. Charlett "in reality (notwithstanding all his Pretenses) rather obstructs Learning . . . than any way promotes it," *indignus ille Collegii Universitatis Magister, et qui viris omnibus literatis risui esse debet*: apart from certain personal grievances, it is sufficiently clear that one real reason why Charlett can do nothing right is that "it is his Business now to talk and act for ye

Whiggs on purpose that he may get Preferment." But Hearne's real bugbear in these troublesome times was Dr. Lancaster, the Provost of Queen's, Vice-Chancellor from 1706 to 1710. No doubt it was a difficult matter for any one so highly placed to satisfy the ideals of Hearne, who is inclined to hold that Vice-Chancellors "in the lump is bad": Dr. Delaune of St. John's, Lancaster's predecessor in the Vice-Cancellarian office, was no better than he should be, and in fact was called Gallio because he cared nothing for the interests of the University: but the Provost comes under a quite special condemnation, as being a typical trimmer and timeserver —"a second Smooth-boots," which is Hearne's usual nickname for him. Lancaster was apparently a prudent and cool-headed man, keenly sensible of the dangers of the time: but in the eyes of an extremist whom Non-jurors alone could satisfy, he was merely a weak-kneed trimmer, wavering between Tory principles, which he was afraid to avow, and a mean compliance with Whiggism. Thus in 1708, on the occasion of his confirmation in the office of Vice-Chancellor, the Provost "made a speech as usual, in which he spoke much in praise of the Doctrine of Passive Obedience, and commended the University for instilling yt Doctrine into ye Young Gentlemen: but it must be noted yt this smooth Dr. never acted according to this Doctrine, but was always for closing, as he found it suited with secular interest." Hence it is not surprising

that when Lancaster went out of office in 1710, Hearne "only notes that Lancaster, I believe, was the worst Vice-Chancellor that ever was in Oxon. 'Tis yt by his Tricks he has rais'd to himself a Pillar of Infamy." Perhaps it almost follows as a necessary corollary that "Old Smooth-boots, when a Tutor, was idle and sottish, and neglected his pupils."

The picture of politics which can be constructed from the pages of Hearne shows Oxford to have been (as it usually is) very fairly representative of the state of English feeling generally. The Whiggism, or at least very much modified Toryism, of Bishops found its counterpart in the halting attitude of prominent academic dignitaries. Apart from these, a Tory spirit prevailed in the University as in the country,—more or less irreconcilably militant as it was less or more embarrassed by searchings of heart about Protestant succession: and in Oxford, as in the country at large, there was a comparatively small but extremely active body of Whigs, strong with the strength of a party that relied more on logic than on sentiment. Political animus showed itself in academic business,—conferring or refusing of degrees and elections to office. College squabbles and jealousies were embittered by politics: Fellows wrangled and slandered in common-room and coffee-house, where for the most part Tories had it all their own way: but at All Souls' there was a small and select "Woodcock

Club"; "on the 30th of January last," Hearne notes, "was an abominable Riot committed in All-Souls' College. Mr. Dalton and Mr. Talbot, son to the Bp. of Oxford, both Fellows, had a Dinner drest, at 12 o'clock, part of which was woodcocks, whose Heads they cut off, in contempt of the memory of the B. Martyr. . . . Mr. Dalton was for having calves-heads, but the cook refused to dress them." Officially, Oxford was loyal—effusively loyal—to William and Mary as to Anne,—*Anna, Stuartorum soboles.* Our own age, which has discarded the conventions of later Roman poetry, stands aghast at the facility with which graduates and undergraduates dropped into adulatory verse whenever the reigning house stood in need of sympathy or congratulation. When Queen Mary died, her decease was deplored by Aldrich the Vice-Chancellor in elegiacs, and by Charlett, afterwards Master of University, in alcaics: Professors, more daring than the moderns, expressed their grief in Arabic, Turkish, Persian, Samaritan, and Malay. The Latin verses are formed on the approved classical models, and deification is merely normal: "Deam rebar non potuisse mori" is not too strong for Lord Plymouth of Christ Church, one of the many Persons of Quality who show a good deal of technical skill as versifiers. The late Queen is (as one might expect) like "purpureus flos succisus aratro," and "udam linquit humum fugiente penna." Similarly in the collection of verses ("Pietas et

Gratulatio") which celebrates the accession of Anne, the new sovereign is "præsens Dea." Here again the University has the gift of many tongues,—Anglo-Saxon, Persian, Hebrew, Arabic, and even Cornish! The fact should be remembered: though it would be rash, perhaps, to infer the existence of profound scholarship. It should be noted that Oxford of that day was fluent and fairly correct in Latin, but expressed itself seldom and for the most part abominably in Greek. This improved later: John Burton of Corpus Christi writes good Greek in the middle of the century.

Tories and Whigs might be at each others' throats: but both parties could be loyal, for the present. Tory Oxford could combine loyalty to William and Mary and Anne, with attachment to the Stuart Kings. Yet it must be confessed that those official *pietates* had so little to do with the real sentiment of the University, that even the advent of a definitely Whig Hanoverian dynasty did not check the flow of frigid and elegant exercises.

But it was the Sacheverell affair in 1709 which especially emphasised the place of Oxford in national politics. The defence of Church principles was not, naturally, compatible with entire consistency in relation to other political problems: and it was not in any way surprising that Magdalen College, which had fought James II. for a Whig principle, should later produce a champion of Toryism. Henry Sacheverell was a Fellow of the College,—where,

strangely enough, he shared a room with Addison: —his portrait hangs in the Hall. Uffenbach saw him, and was surprised that so well-looking a man had undertaken such a discreditable business—*so garstige Händel angefangen.* The story of his short period of fame or notoriety belongs to the history of England, and need not be retold here. Mere audacity in expressing the views held by the rank and file of High Churchmen gave him a momentary prominence: he was otherwise in no way qualified, apparently, to lead or represent a party in the State. Even some High Churchmen regarded him as little better than a firebrand, possibly as dangerous to his own cause as to any other:

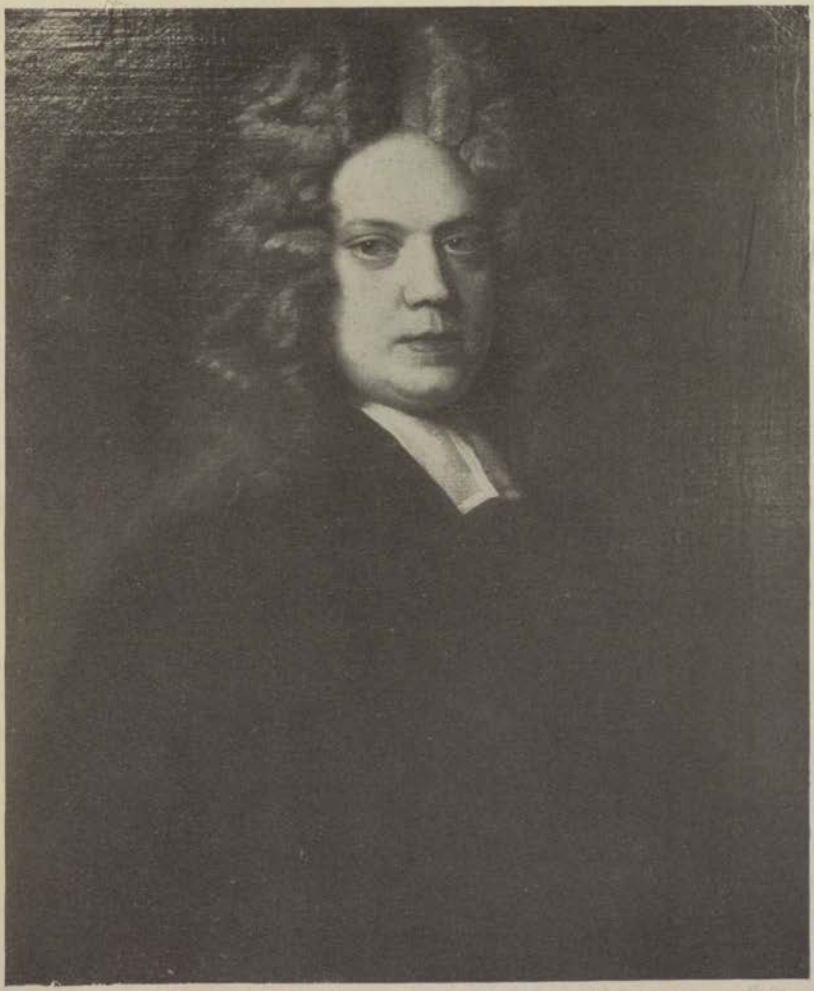
> "Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istid,
> Tempus eget"

was the sentiment of the soberer heads among his party. One of Hearne's London correspondents calls Sacheverell "your mighty Boanerges," who "thundered most furiously at Paul's against ye phanaticks," insomuch that "All ye Congregation were shaken agen at the terrour of his inveterate expressions": "I could not have imagined," says another correspondent, "if I had not heard it myself, that so much Heat, Passion, Violence, and scurrilous Language, to say no worse of it, could have come from a Protestant Pulpit. . . . I'm sure such Discourses will never convert anyone, but I'm

afraid will rather give the Enemies of our Church great advantage over her: since the best that her true sons can say of it, is that the Man is mad: and indeed most people here think him so." Hearne himself, whom no one can really satisfy but a Nonjuror, had at first a very poor opinion of the preacher. Some months before Sacheverell's celebrated sermons the diarist had occasion to notice him as a frequent preacher at St. Mary's, and described him in the kind of language which he generally reserves for a Whig: proud, ignorant, vicious, drunken, loquacious, "verba contumeliosa et pulpito sacro prorsus indigna effutiit: nonnumquam etiam fanaticos et rebelles, ac si honestus homo esset, conviciis lacessivit. Verum est plane simulator improbus"—an unprincipled charlatan: really worse, in fact, than his future opponent "that rascal Ben Hoadly." This is rather strong, for a Tory. It was the doubt of Sacheverell's sincerity which rankled:

"Among ye High Churchmen I find there are several
That stick to ye Doctrine of Harry Sacheverell.
Among ye Low Church too I find yt as oddly
Some pin all their faith upon Benjamin Hoadly.
But we moderate Men do our Judgment suspend,
For God only knows how these Matters will end;
For Salisbury, Burnett, and Kennett White show
That as ye times vary so principles go:
And twenty years hence, for ought you or I know,
'Twill be Hoadly the High, and Sacheverell ye Low."

Mad or sane, sincere or insincere, Sacheverell found himself famous. Another age might have allowed



HENRY SACHEVERELL

FROM THE PAINTING IN THE HALL OF MAGDALEN COLLEGE

the sermons described by Hearne's correspondents to pass unnoticed: but the pulpit was a recognised force in politics, and the Whig Government could not avoid taking action against the preacher,—with the result of giving him, what he probably most desired, celebrity. The misjudged impeachment which gave the Whigs a Cadmean victory and the Tory firebrand a cheap and highly desirable martyrdom, made him a popular hero wherever the Tory rank and file did congregate, and nowhere more than in Oxford,—which is always only too ready to respond to the cry of "The Church is in danger": for Oxford was the headquarters of the Tory clergy and squirearchy.

A Pro-Vice-Chancellor was Sacheverell's bail. There was great delight in Oxford at the conclusion of the trial: "Last night," Hearne writes on 24th March, "and on Wednesday night were Bonfires in Oxford for Joy of Dr. Sacheverell's being delivered with so gentle a punishment, and the Mob burnt a tub, with the Image of a tub Preacher, in one of them." A week later we hear that "The Ld. Mayor of London has commanded a stop to be put in the City to Bonfires, Illuminations, and other publick Rejoycings for Dr. Sacheverell: but ye like have been in all parts of England, and they are still kept up, and in Oxford Mr. Hoadly" (the champion of the other side) "was burnt in Effigie and the Mob burnt his Book." Hearne was not a man to shed his prejudices easily. But he seems

to have been rather shaken by the extraordinary success of the Sacheverell incident in consolidating the sadly disintegrated Tory party: recognising that even a firebrand might have its uses. When it turned out that Sacheverell's impeachment intensified popular enthusiasm for Church principles, the end was held to justify the means. Anyhow, the diarist reconsiders his earlier view, and acknowledges that there may be some good in Sacheverell after all: "it must be granted he has shew'd himself in this Case to be a brave, bold Man, and in the main truly honest, and he has merited the Applause of all good Friends to the Church of England and Monarchy." But if Hearne's ill opinion of Sacheverell was shaken for a moment, it is only fair to so consistent a hater to acknowledge that later the diarist was as bitter as ever,—always suspecting the Doctor's sincerity, and dwelling with evident gusto on a hostile biography (*The Modern Fanatick*) which shows how Sacheverell will not acknowledge his own uncle, and has no skill in Astronomy.

Such was the Sacheverell affair,—the last outbreak of angry and militant Toryism during the reign of Anne. Political conditions presently gave the defenders of "High Church principles" a temporary supremacy, of which they were rudely deprived by the Queen's death and the accession of the Elector of Hanover. So abrupt a shock could not fail to produce a storm of indignation in the "Jacobite capital,"—as indeed in every

parsonage and manor-house that looked to Oxford as the citadel and stronghold of sound political and ecclesiastical principles. The veriest timeserver among Tory Dons forgot his opportunism for the moment: Oxford was for the nonce in almost open rebellion against the new régime. The Tories, says Hearne, had only themselves to thank for being turned out of power: but this did not mend matters. It was a tolerably gross insult to the reigning Sovereign that on 20th October 1714, the very day of George I.'s Coronation, "Sir Constantine Phipps Kt. (lately Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and turn'd out by ye said K. George)" had the honour of a D.C.L. degree conferred on him. In the following year the Duke of Ormond, Chancellor of the University, being impeached and forced to take refuge in France, Oxford elected his brother Lord Arran to fill his place: the new Chancellor took the oaths of his office on 22nd September, amid such shouting and expressions of joy as Hearne says he never saw before. Meantime there had been serious riots in Oxford On 28th and 29th May of the same year 1715,—the first day being George I.'s birthday,—"the People," says Hearne, "run up and down crying King James the 3rd, the true King, no Usurper, the Duke of Ormond, etc., and Healths were everywhere drank suitable to the Occasion, and every one at the same time Drank to a new Restoration, which I heartily wish may speedily happen."

They "pulled down a good part of the Quakers' and Anabaptists' meeting-houses" and attacked the house where the Whig "Constitution Club" was holding a meeting, so that the Constitutionalists had to fly for their lives. Much noise and uproar followed, and a shot from Brasenose is said to have wounded one of the Tory leaders. Street riots in Oxford begin easily and are ended without much difficulty, as a rule: nor does it appear that this was an exception. What part the University took in the disturbance is not very clear. The Tory academic dignitaries laid the blame on the Whig Constitution Club, which was about to carry on Extravagant Designs, but was prevented by an Honest Party. The Club naturally took a different view. In spite of its notoriety, the whole affair appears to have been of no great consequence (except indeed for the destruction of the meeting-houses): but, as Tacitus says, "in civitate discordi . . . parvæ res magnis motibus agebantur"—trifles assumed an exaggerated importance. And of course it must be remembered that Oxford was a far more representative town than it is now: "When Oxford draws knife, England's soon at strife," could still be believed to be true: even in point of size the town was relatively considerable. Ayliffe's calculation of 3000 resident Dons and undergraduates certainly refers to the seventeenth century, not to his own day. But undoubtedly the University was numerically a far more important

part of the country than it is now. Anyhow, the Government took a serious view of the matter, held the Tory Heads (perhaps rightly) responsible, and sent "rattling letters" to Dr. Charlett, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, and the Mayor. Lord Townshend, who wrote the rattling letters, "says his Majesty (for so they will stile this silly Usurper)," writes Hearne, "hath been fully assur'd that the Riots both nights were begun by Scholars, and that Scholars promoted them, and that he, Dr. Charlett, was so far from discountenancing them, that he did not endeavour in the least to suppress them." 1715 was a troubled year at Oxford. On June 10th (the Pretender's birthday) there would have been public rejoicings had they not been stopped by Dr. Charlett, the Proctors, and others: the rattling letters had their effect. Hearne himself walked out with a party of "honest" men to Foxcombe, where they were "very merry." Bishop Smalridge, being what Hearne calls a Sneaker, went no further than to celebrate the occasion privately in his lodgings, with the noblemen and gentlemen-commoners of Christ Church. There was more trouble in August, when some scholars rescued one Prichard, who had been committed to custody for cursing King George. Town and University were alike disloyal. In the same month an officer "beat up for Volunteer Dragoons in Oxford. But he was hissed at by many, especially by the Scholars, and

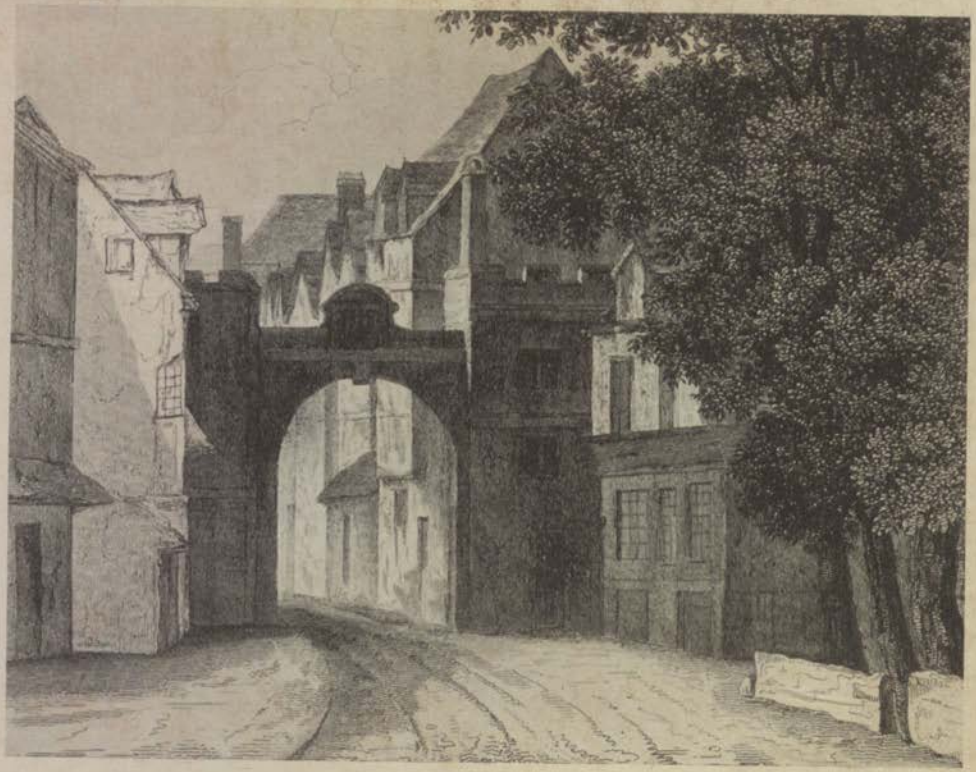
found very little Encouragement. Which irritated him to such a Degree (he was a Captain) that he declared Oxford was the most devillish, hellish place that ever he came near. 'Ay, 'tis certainly Hell,'" said the honest Captain (whose definition of Heaven one would have heard gladly). He could have raised three hundred men in London in a few minutes, but here "hardly any one comes in, such an inveteracy do they show to his Majesty." The author of "The Muses' Fountain Clear" might try to show that Oxford was only dissembling her love for the Hanoverian dynasty after all, and that even Dr. Sacheverell had prayed at his trial for the succession of the illustrious House of Hanover. Perhaps he had. But the disloyalty of the University was beyond question or apology. Fidelity to the Stuarts could not be forgotten in a day: many an undergraduate no doubt was keen to strike a blow for James III., as his grandfather had ridden out to Edgehill for Charles I., or with Rupert to raid the Parliamentary pickets in Buckinghamshire. Matters had come to such a pass that, in the words of a contemporary pamphleteer, the University "would have been illuminated in a few days with the Flame of Rebellion and the Students had appeared in open arms against the King, on behalf of a Popish Pretender, for the safety of the Church,"—had not

> "The King, observing with judicious eyes
> The state of both his Universities,"

sent "a troup of horse" to overawe disaffection,—in fact, Col. Pepper's dragoons, and another regiment. This force marched into Oxford from Banbury on 6th October, at four in the morning. They "beset the Passages out of Oxford," and then went to the Vice-Chancellor and Mayor, whose assistance they desired "in a rude manner." All College gates being closed by the Vice-Chancellor's order, the soldiers spent the morning in searching "Publick Houses" for Jacobite officers who had been in hiding there: most of these had already escaped: one of them, Colonel Owen, "a brave, stout Man," was nearly caught at the Greyhound Inn, but "having notice that the House was beset, he presently made his escape over Magdalen College wall," within which, then as afterwards, there were persons not actuated by a lively loyalty towards the House of Hanover. There, according to a tradition, he was concealed in the turret of the building called the "Grammar Hall." Colonel Owen's servant was arrested, and two or three other persons: and the soldiers left Oxford at four in the afternoon. Two months later there were some further arrests. Two "honest, Non-juring gentlemen" of Hearne's acquaintance, Mr. Sterling and Mr. Gery of Balliol, "were taken up by the Guard of the Souldiers now at Oxford," but released after a day or so. Balliol, it should be remembered, was at this time the very citadel of Tory principles.

The events of so dangerous a year as 1715 showed how little was really to be feared by a Whig Government from the Jacobite capital. The bark of the University was worse than its bite. But the rebellious temper of Oxford remained as a standing cause of offence: and raids by Colonel Pepper's dragoons could only have a temporary effect. It is not surprising that there was a cry for a "Visitation" of the Universities: a pamphleteer of 1717 calls for Government interference, on the ground that the "scandalous lives of those wretches who call themselves of the Clergy" are due to the state of the Universities—particularly Oxford: Cambridge, though bad, is better. The nature of University oaths (the writer continues) is such that young men are "Bred up in the abominable practice of unavoidable perjury: horrid Beginning!" Universities are "a centre of disaffection and disloyalty": "nurseries of rebellion and treason": "cages of unclean birds." But the Whig Government wisely enough decided apparently to take no action in the matter, realising that Visitations are apt to do more harm than good. It was much easier to deal with the caucus of Heads who really governed Oxford by the usual methods of threat and bribe, than to create martyrs and malcontents by a Visitation.

The Heads were in a difficult position. Most of them were Tories by principle and tradition. Yet,—at worst in the interests of their own



EAST GATE

FROM AN ENGRAVING BY J. SKELTON

advancement, at best for the safety (as they probably thought) of their respective societies, they must make their peace with the Hanoverian régime: and they must do this in the teeth of criticism from their own rank and file, who had less at stake and were little inclined to make allowance for the timeservings of their superiors. Hearne records with evident glee that his acquaintance Charlett, the very active and useful Master of University, has been moved by fear of a Visitation to write a letter to the Chancellor (rather strangely, as the Chancellor was Ormond's brother), assuring him "that University College is entirely devoted and attached to the Illustrious House of Hanover." Perhaps the alleged letter was only a skit: but anyhow it illustrates the difficulty of the period.

However, if Heads were obliged to profess their own devotion to the House of Hanover, they could square matters with their consciences by doing their best to make matters unpleasant for the local Hanoverians. John Ayliffe, a Whig Fellow of New College, had published a book entitled *The Ancient and Present State of the University of Oxford* (Hearne calls it a silly, lying, abusive, and injudicious Rhapsody)—a work which apparently threw several Tory Heads of Colleges "into a Fit of Shivering and a strange Panic Fear." For this offence the Vice-Chancellor, Gardiner of All Souls', was commanded by the Chancellor to proceed against Ayliffe "for writing and publishing an

infamous libel, wherein the Doctor had defamed King Charles the First and Second and King James the First and Second, Archbishop Laud, the late Ministry, and many other persons." The University Court proceeded with the fairness and impartiality to be expected where the prosecutor was also the presiding judge, and Ayliffe defended himself on technical grounds of his enemies' illegality: but eventually he was deprived of his degree and banished from Oxford: and the machinations of the Tory Warden of New College forced him to resign his Fellowship (unless, as Hearne says, he sold it). The position of Heads of Houses of this critical period falls short of entire respectability. They must submit to a Whig Government. But they can do something to make submission tolerable by bullying a Whig Fellow. It was of course still easier to bully a Whig undergraduate (or Bachelor). Rightly or wrongly, the "Meadowcourt affair" was represented by Whig writers as a scandalous miscarriage of justice: "a gentleman of Merton College," such is Amherst's summary of the story, "was put into the Black Book for drinking King George's health, and obliged to plead the benefit of the *act of grace* to get his degree, after he had been kept out of it two years for that heinous offence"—a sufficiently damning indictment. Perhaps the story is worth re-telling. The "Constitution Club" above-mentioned—an association formed, according to Tory opinion, for the planning

of Extravagant Schemes, or otherwise the maintenance of Whig and Hanoverian principles—had met on May 29th, 1716, to drink "the King's and other loyal healths" in the company of some officers of Colonel Handyside's regiment. This was apparently too much for the patience of Oxford. Gownsmen and townsmen gathered outside the tavern, threw squibs into the meeting, and insulted it with "loud peals of hisses and conclamations of *down with the Roundheads.*" At about eleven at night, the Junior Proctor, Mr. Holt of Magdalen, came upon the scene,—one may hope, only in the interests of public order,—and requested Mr. Meadowcourt, the steward of the club, to give some account of its presence at the tavern. Meadowcourt replied that they were met to celebrate the restoration of Charles II. and to drink King George's health: and that they should be obliged to him if he would drink King George's health with them: which the Proctor "after some intreaties" consented to do. One of Handyside's officers made himself responsible for the good conduct of the scholars present, and "waited upon the Proctor downstairs." According to the Whig chronicler, all was done in decency and good order: but next day it appeared how parlous a thing it is to invite a Proctor to drink the King's health. Holt sent for Meadowcourt, explained to him that while he himself might overlook the "affront" offered to him, his colleague, the Senior Proctor (White of Christ Church), was

very angry, and not to be pacified. This was too true. Meadowcourt apologised to Holt for any improper conduct of which he might have been guilty: but was nevertheless handed over to the tender mercies of the Christ Church Proctor: who used very strong language about the Club in general and Meadowcourt in particular, and eventually put the luckless Constitutionalist into the Black Book (a gloomy volume in which are registered the names of gross offenders against academic law) and sentenced him to be kept back from his Master's degree for two years. He and Mr. Carty of University were accused of "prophaning, with mad intemperance, that day on which he ought, with sober chearfulness, to have commemorated the restoration of King Charles II.," and "drinking in company with those persons who insolently boast of their loyalty to King George, and endeavour to render almost all the university, besides themselves, suspected of disaffection": of resisting the Proctors: Meadowcourt especially, of abetting officers "who ran up and down the high-street with their swords drawn," and "commanding all the company to drink King George's health." Such is the story told by Nicholas Amherst, the author of *Terræ Filius*, a Whig scholar of St. John's who was in permanent opposition to the academic authorities of his time, and who was in fact rusticated by his own society. Obviously, the source is tainted. The Whigs and Tories of 1720

or so did not go out of their way to make allowances for each other's failings: nor can the judgments of undergraduates upon Dons be invariably accepted as final. Moreover, Amherst was rusticated,—a fact which renders him open to suspicion as a narrator: yet again one does not know whether he was rusticated because he was a Whig, or a Whig because he was rusticated. At any rate, he is a partisan, and his story may omit essential details while not departing from verbal truth. Theoretically, no one can blame one subject for inviting another to drink their common Sovereign's health. But the action may not be laudable at all times and in all places. A perfectly civil proposal may be made in a perfectly uncivil way. Altogether the affair illustrates the difficulty of writing history.

Meadowcourt's troubles had only begun. When the prescribed two years had elapsed, he proposed to supplicate for his degree. This was more easily said than done. The Proctor of the year demurred to allowing Meadowcourt to supplicate, on the ground that (out of mere courtesy) it was necessary first to obtain Mr. White's consent. White was approached, and had no objection personally: but he could not consent, he said, without the concurrence of Mr. Holt. Unluckily Mr. Holt also "had a partner," Mr. White! Neither of them would, apparently, be the first to take any step! They had resolved (says Amherst) that Meadowcourt should not have his degree: so White could do

nothing without Holt, and Holt would do nothing without White. At last they so far collaborated ("jumbled their learned noddles together" is the historian's uncharitable expression) as to draw up a form of apology which Meadowcourt could not subscribe without loss of self-respect. He refused to sign a document which made him confess and ask pardon for his crimes, and promise amendment for the future. Now, if he was to have a degree at all, it could only be by pleading the King's "Act of Grace," the amnesty granted by George I. to rebels: it was thought that this could be made to fit the case of a Hanoverian who had erred, if at all, from excess of loyalty. But here again there were difficulties. Meadowcourt must employ a "Proctor of the Vice-Chancellor's court" to plead his cause. One "Proctor" after another begged to be excused: the Vice-Chancellor was "dilatory and evasive," and clearly did not wish to have the matter brought before him: and it was only after much delay and tergiversation that the "Black Book" was produced, Meadowcourt's "crimes wiped off by the act of grace," and his name struck out of the book. Even now, when he at last stood for his degree, it was twice "denied," and only granted at a third application. Thus did he at length escape from the "hardships, injuries, oppression, and discouragements" which await those (as Amherst says) who "insolently dare to affront the University by honouring King George and the Protestant succession."

It certainly looks as if Meadowcourt had had hard measure. But Tory chroniclers are silent: and Hearne, who by this time disliked academic dignitaries almost as much as Whigs, has very little to say about the matter. Meadowcourt became Sub-Warden of Merton afterwards: in which capacity he celebrated January 30th as if it had been a Gaudy,—being indeed, says Hearne, "a most vile wretch." This was in 1728.

There can be no reasonable doubt that there was a strong anti-Hanoverian animus among the governors of the University, and that the smallness of the Tory caucus in which power was centralised made it a very efficient instrument of prejudice. Theoretically, the initiative rested with the Heads of Houses: practically an "inner ring" of these controlled the policy of the University, on the principle of being as Tory as it dared to be and as Whig as it must. A letter written in 1721 (in reference to the possibility of a contested election of a Parliamentary representative) deprecates opposition to the decrees of this oligarchy: Universities are no places for the application of democratic principles: "the University electors will become *Mobbish* and *Popular*: and this Sacred Place, where *Peace* and *Order* ought to reign, and *Unanimity in good Principles* ought most eminently to shine (both for its own Glory and an Example to others), will be converted into no better than a *Country Corporation*: And Strife, Envy, Hatred,

and Contentions will rove about like devouring Lions: *Order* and *Government* will be no more, but every one will do what is righteous in his own Eyes. If once the *Younger and Unthinking Part of the University*" (that is, of course, the younger graduates) "meet with Success against their Governors, they, like a furious Horse, will too soon feel their own Strength, and throw off all Submission, and, consequently, *Opposition* and *Rebellion* will be their first Principle." Moreover, "'tis more than probable that the Squadron of Whigs, if they go together, will turn" the election. "No one Body of Men in the Kingdom know better their own Interest, or pursue it closer, than the Whigs." As a result, "we may entirely lose the University, and in Time a *Whig* may have as good a chance to succeed as a *Tory*"—a terrible contingency indeed. In this instance the oligarchic influence is directed more against insubordinate Tories than against Whigs. The two sitting members of Parliament, Messrs. Bromley and Clark, were regarded as "safe" men, while Dr. King, the favourite of the "younger and unthinking part of the University," was a thoroughgoing Jacobite: and the Heads did not wish to embroil themselves further with the Government. A contemporary pamphleteer complains that on this occasion "voters" (especially voters from ultra-Tory Balliol) "who had the misfortune to be in a state of dependency were treated by the Heads of Houses with

the same Inhumanity with which great Tyrants treat their Slaves." Young and ardent Tories then might suffer on occasion from oppression, nearly as much as their political opponents: and the hands of timeserving Heads were heavy on Nonjurors, as being dangerous and compromising extremists. Thus Dr. Leigh of Balliol, a prominent Tory, is accused by Hearne of oppressing Nonjurors and favouring "Hanoverians and Latitudinarians." Indeed it is pretty obvious that Mr. J. R. Green overstates the case by saying that Oxford was a purgatory for Whigs; at least, it was a place of trial for others as well. Whiggism might be unfashionable. Coffee-house cliques might sometimes look askance at a Hanoverian, and the beauties of Merton and Magdalen Walks might prefer the society of Tories. It was possible to complain that Whig poets suffer from inequality of opportunity:

"Faction at Oxford is the Test
To which each Author must submit:
Ev'n Dullness there, in Treason drest,
Clears up and brightens into Wit.

"The Bard reigns Darling of the Crowd
Who dares the Government abuse:
But Quarter never is allowed
To a vile, flattering, Whiggish Muse."

But if Whigs were in a minority, they were active and militant. They might suffer from petty tyranny occasionally at the hands of the government of Oxford: elections might go against them, as the

writer of a letter to Oxford Tories complains about 1750: perhaps Mr. Fysher of Oriel was elected to the librarianship of the Bodleian because he was, as Hearne says, a Tory, while his opponent, Mr. Wise, was a Whig: but they had the Government of England on their side, and as time went on they were less and less out of sympathy even with the "country party," the rank and file of clergy and squires: such would be the natural effect of Walpole's régime. The very bitterness of the Tory Oxonian proves them rather dangerous rivals than downtrodden enemies. Preferment and the withholding of it tended to sap the Toryism of the ruling caucus. Politics went by Colleges: and Colleges, though predominantly, were by no means universally, Tory. Among those which long remained faithful to "the old family," St. John's was "notoriously Jacobite" at least till 1730: so was Trinity. Balliol, the stronghold of obscurantism and Conservative principles, was especially connected with the "High Borlase," a Tory wine-club which met annually on 18th August at the King's Head Tavern (according to the historian of Balliol) to drink the health of the Pretender. Dr. Leigh, elected Master in 1726,—called by Shepilinda "a little tiny man with a Huge Bagg full of sense in his Head, and many packets of good Humours in his pockets,"—was the first clergyman to join the club. Colonel Owen, the Jacobite, took refuge in Magdalen. But Merton and Wadham were loyal

to the Government: and it appears from the story of Ayliffe that there was a Whig minority at New College. Elections brought these political differences into prominence. Exeter, always firm for the Whig interest, was so zealous that at the "famous" Oxfordshire election of 1754 the College allowed its back gate to be used by Whig voters ("an unlettered hungry mob," according to the Tory Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Huddesford of Trinity) as a means of access to the polling-booths, which had been erected just south of "Canditch," on the site of the present inner quadrangle: while Balliol and St. John's, apparently, were keeping open house for Tories. Christ Church, with its headship in the gift of Government, could not be expected to remain Tory: and it is not surprising to find the House one of the four Colleges that voted "solid" for the Whigs in 1750.

If, after the first outbreaks, the political importance of Oxford Toryism steadily diminished, the governing temper of the University remained anti-Hanoverian: and in the forties of the century, the renewed Jacobite danger brought Oxford once more before the public. The "Blacow affair" of 1747 illustrates the view which Government thought it necessary to take of academic disloyalty. To us the whole thing seems trivial enough. Certain undergraduates paraded the streets invoking curses on the House of Hanover and blessings on the Stuarts, and mobbed a Canon of Windsor who

ventured to reprove their disloyalty: but the Canon and His Majesty's Government took the incident very seriously. It is related in detail by Canon Blacow himself, in a letter addressed to the Tory Principal of St. Mary's Hall, who had called him an informer, and compared an ecclesiastical dignitary to a Delator in the worst days of Tiberius. "On Tuesday" (says the writer) "the 23rd day of February 1747, I was in a private room at Winter's Coffee House, near the High Street in Oxford, in company with several Gentlemen of the University and an Officer in his Regimental Habit. About seven o'clock in the evening, a person, belonging to the Coffee House, came into the Room and told us, there were a number of Gownsmen at the door, shouting K—g J—s for ever, Pr— C—s, and other treasonable words. Upon which I thought myself doubly bound to take notice of the Treason: because I had taken the Oath of Abjuration, and had been invested by the University with the authority of an Officer in that particular Street." What with this and "a Mind ever Zealous for the honour of my Sovereign," the Canon went out and followed the rioters from the street before the coffee-house into the High Street: "where they continued to shout the same treasonable expressions," "almost in one continued Shout." With a boldness equal to his loyalty, Canon Blacow seized Mr. Whitmore, one of the rioters, and "insisted upon carrying him to the Proctor": but there was

a rescue, and eventually, "the Riot still increasing, after Mr. Whitmore had been forced from me, I endeavoured to take refuge in Oriel College: which several Gentlemen, whom I apprehended to belong to that College, strove to prevent: so that tho' I enter'd, it was with great difficulty. Having been some time within the College, I heard the Rioters, who still continued in the same place, having been join'd by many other persons (as I apprehend, about forty), continue the same Treasonable Shouts: and one part of the Rioters louder than the rest, in crying D—n K—g G—e and all his Assistants, and cursing me in particular. Upon which, stepping to the Gate, I told them, I heard their Treason, and should certainly bring them to justice." But it was one against many: for Mr. Harrison, a M.A. of C.C.C., being requested to assist against the crowd, only returned an "abusive and insulting" answer. The Canon was in bodily danger. Mr. Dawes, one of the disloyal gownsmen, "stripping to fight, said, *I am a man, who dare say, God bless K—g James the Third: and tell you, my name is* DAWES *of* ST. MARY'S HALL. *I am a man of an independent fortune, and therefore afraid of no man.*" At this moment the Proctor fortunately appeared on the scene, and took Mr. Dawes; "Mr. Luxmore," another rioter, "made his escape: though the Proctor endeavoured to stop him by the peremptory command of *siste per fidem.*" All these matters were duly laid by Canon Blacow

before the Vice-Chancellor, Dr. John Purnell of New College. The Vice-Chancellor promised to have the young men "severely punished" by a delay of their degrees, and an imposition: but this did not satisfy the Canon: the Vice-Chancellor, he said, ought to inquire more closely into the case, and take the depositions of witnesses. Dr. Purnell would not do this: and in fact was disposed to treat the whole matter rather lightly, as a mere "indiscretion." Not so a judge of the Circuit, who happened to be in Oxford shortly after this, and advised the Canon to lay the whole matter before a Secretary of State: declining, however, to allow his name to be used. Eventually, as the matter "was now become the subject of General Conversation through the Kingdom," Government itself took the initiative, invited the Canon to give "a particular account of the Treasonable Riot," and as a result ordered a prosecution in the King's Bench against Messrs. Whitmore, Dawes, and Luxmore. One was acquitted, the other two were punished with excessive severity: being, says the historian of Balliol, "condemned to be imprisoned for two years, to find security for their good behaviour for seven years, and to go round immediately to all the Courts in Westminster Hall, with a paper on their foreheads detailing the particulars of their offence." The sentence seems disproportionate to a crime which looks very like a mere schoolboy extravagance: but in 1747 the

Government was naturally enough in a bad temper.

Nor was anti-Hanoverian spirit inactive among the Dons. It was two years later (in April 1749) that Dr. William King, Principal of St. Mary Hall, made his celebrated Latin speech in the Sheldonian Theatre on the occasion of the dedication of the Radcliffe Library—an oration in which there is a good deal about Dr. Radcliffe but a great deal more about the corruption of manners and the decay of Universities under the domination of the House of Brunswick. What gained it much celebrity at the time was its conclusion, which consists of a series of paragraphs each beginning with *Redeat* (Restore!), a word of which Dr. King and every one who heard him knew perfectly well the political signification—"Restore at the same time, him the great genius of Britain (whether he is the Messenger of the very Spirit of God), the firmest guard of Liberty and Religion: and let him banish into Exile (into Perpetual Exile) from among our countrymen all barbarous Wars, Slaughters, Rapines, Years of Pestilence, haughty Usurpations" (such as those of the Hanoverian Kings), "infamous Informers" (obviously, Canon Blacow) "and every Evil. Restore and prosper him, that the Commonwealth may revive, Faith be recall'd, Peace established, Laws ordained, just, honest, salutary, useful Laws, to deter the Abandoned, restrain Armies, favour the Learned, spare the

Imprudent, relieve the Poor, delight all,"—and so forth. It will be observed that the above version (published by one who is apparently an ardent admirer of Dr. King and his principles) makes the Doctor more openly Jacobite than his Latin words suggest: all that King says, for instance, is "*Redeat magnus ille genius Britanniæ*," which of course does not necessarily point to a living man: but "He the great genius of Britain" is a very different thing. However, there was never any doubt, among the crowded audience in the Theatre or anywhere else, what the meaning of *Redeat* was: and the orator had to endure many hard knocks from contemporary Whiggism,—criticism which he really enjoyed, having been a Tory controversialist from his youth up. What with Canon Blacow, and John Burton of Corpus Christi, Fellow of Eton "(Jaccus Etonensis," as King calls him), a respectable Whig, whose rather ponderous attempts to reform King by reproof are treated by the latter in a spirit of entire levity, the Principal of St. Mary Hall must have had his hands full in these days. Oxford rang with the echoes of the "Redeat" speech, and pamphlets and letters "arising out of" the speech, denunciatory, explanatory, apologetic,—Burton lashing King, and King travestying Burton. These relics of the fray lie in dusty corners of the Bodleian. But even Dr. King's ironic humour and lightness of touch—singular in an age when the rapier was less often the weapon of controversy

than the sledge-hammer—can hardly make such ancient quarrels real and interesting to modern readers.

One concludes from the literature of 1749–50 that Oxford could hardly be as yet called well-affected to the Hanoverian dynasty. The author of a letter to the Oxford Tories in 1750 remonstrates with the Dons for being permanently "agin the Government." "Suppose on a fair scrutiny into the conduct of the leaders of your party, for more than thirty years last past, it shall appear that no one Minister, no one Measure of Government has obtained your approbation, or escaped your displeasure, can you, in such case, expect that the world should have such partiality for your sentiments, as to pronounce that the Rulers of Great Britain are always wrong, and the Rulers of Oxford always right? . . . If in the Election of Members into your several Societies (with an exception to two or at most three of your Colleges) such candidates for your favour, as labour under suspicion of any zeal for the Government, have often been for that reason *alone* rejected, when their learning was unquestionable, and their morals without a blemish :— And if in certain publick elections, made by the whole body of the University, the first point resolved by the ruling party hath been '*that the vote of every Whig elector should be fruitless*' : it is to be feared that the world, unacquainted with your local policy, may be apt to impute so extra-

ordinary a procedure to the absence of a proper zeal for the Government in that ruling party.—And lastly, the Press has furnished the world with evidence that one academick (a gentleman of confessed learning, a tutor of acknowledged abilities, a citizen in high and deserved esteem for his probity, his honour, his laudable conduct in moral and social life) has lately been treated as ill as, by the little low arts of ridicule and malevolence, he could be treated: but for what reason? why truly because this tutor had the conscience and courage to publish a *Lecture of Loyalty*, and to oblige every friend to Great Britain with a rational and cogent defence of its present constitution in Church and State." Later, the pamphleteer is like all Whigs of the day, shocked at Dr. King's "Redeat" speech: and cannot withhold an intimation of his concern "that prevalent parts and masterly talents should at any time or on any occasion be disgraced by the society of *Slander*, *Obloquy*, *Faction*, *Sedition*: and that a Head, well-instructed, is not always attended by a benevolent Heart. Spleen and malevolence in an able writer, an admired speaker, are to be lamented as a publick misfortune." In fact Dr. King had a wicked wit, and those who met him in controversy received a good deal more than they gave. It was only left to them to lament the prostitution of his talents.

These brawls and speeches and pamphleteerings cannot be said exactly to mark a recrudescence of

political animus. The bitterness was always there: only occasion brought it to the surface. But for twenty years before this Oxford Jacobitism or Toryism (George I.'s close alliance with the Whigs did much to turn Tories into Jacobites) had been more and more an affair of occasional street shoutings, common-room squabbles, toastings of the "King over the water." It was a day of small things. The Heads, realising the need of outward conformity, had taken public notice of a sermon preached by Mr. Coningsby in 1726, of which the tone was held to be disloyal: and in 1727 an address of Convocation had protested (not, it is true, without much opposition) the "unshaken loyalty of the University," and its "utmost detestation of all open or secret attempts against your Government": the irreconcilables were in a minority, most of the University being, as Hearne says, "infatuated"—or otherwise, men of prudence. Probably Dr. Bradshaw, Dean of Christ Church and Bishop of Bristol, said truly that the University only showed its loyalty out of a principle of interest. Satisfied, however, with such perfunctory assurances, the Whig Government patched up a truce with the University of Oxford: both parties, as it were, compromised matters on a basis of mutual dislike. It was tolerably clear that neither had really much, under ordinary circumstances, to fear from the other—on the one side because the will, and on the other because the

power to hurt was absent. A period of quiescence succeeds to the turbulence of the early century—but it is the quiescence, so far as the rank and file of Tory Dons is concerned, of sullen and silent acrimony. Oxford Jacobites were all the more firmly rooted in their creed after 1720, because the creed was only an academic principle, no longer likely to bring them into practical contact with inconvenient consequences. During the reign of Anne the practical problem must have been a standing difficulty as long as there was any real chance of James III.'s accession. As a Tory, I defend the Protestant faith: how then can I admit a Roman Catholic sovereign? This must have made Whigs of many lukewarm Tories.

But once George I. was firmly established on the throne, the situation changed. Nothing was less probable than a Stuart restoration: the logical dilemma of the Jacobite High Churchman was not likely, as before, to take a practical form: and Tories might hate the Hanoverian régime not only with less fear of punishment (as the Government ceased to anticipate serious danger from the Universities), but without *arrière pensée* as to the very embarrassing results of a Jacobite success. Having thus full liberty to hate it, they did so: and have incurred, therefore, much subsequent censure from reasonable men. These call Oxford Jacobitism the "childish display of impotent resentment." The late Mr. J. R. Green (in whose

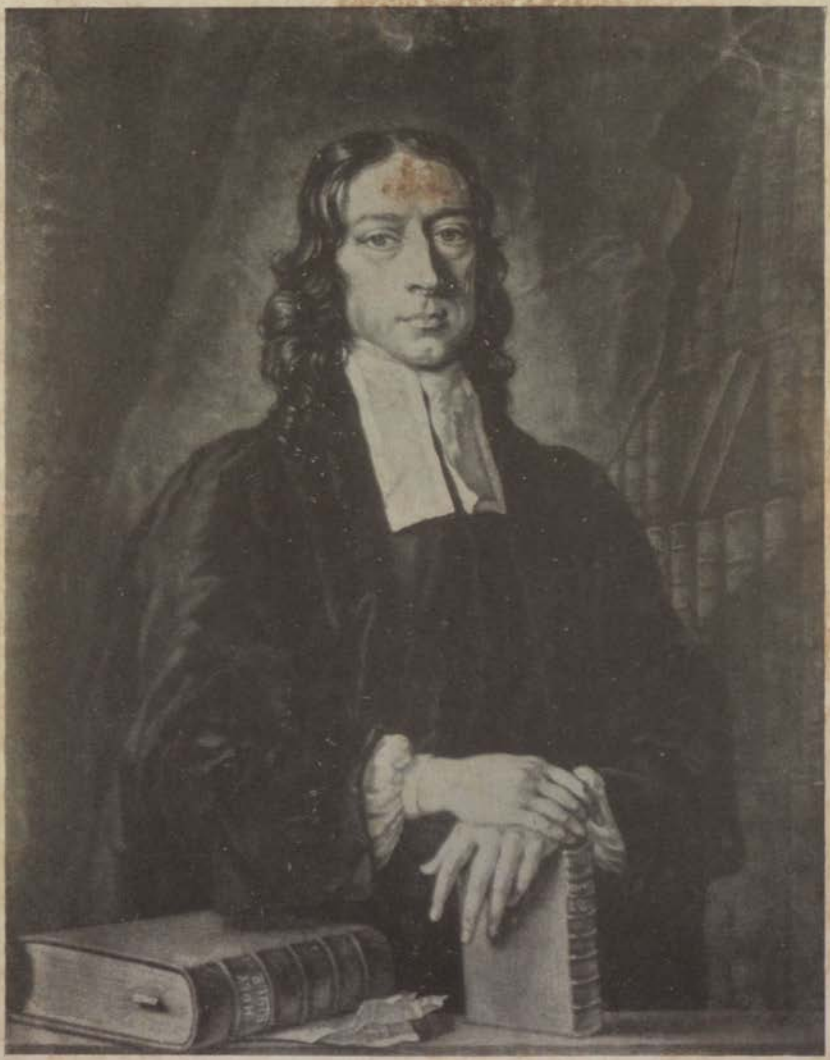
eyes no Oxford Tory could do right) uses a simile more lively than pleasing: "It may be," he writes, "that like the monks who, every day during the warm season, shake the vermin from their habits into a dungeon beneath, the Hanoverian statesmen were glad to brush off the prejudices and bigotries which, if accumulated elsewhere, might have given them so much trouble, into this antiquated receptacle, and to leave it untouched, as the monks left theirs untouched—'La Pulciara'—the Fleaery of England!" Surely the Jacobite spirit deserves a little less unsympathetic and contemptuous treatment. The Tories had, at Oxford, the traditions of the University and the very *genius loci* on their side: and apart from mere sentiment—yet even this sometimes deserves consideration—many thoughtful Oxonians must have seen but little in Georgian England to compel enthusiasm. There was little to choose between Caroline and Georgian courts in the matter of morality. For the nation in general, the second quarter of the eighteenth century touched the nadir of gross and unashamed materialism. Seldom has there been so little public spirit. "The nation," says Mr. Lecky, "gradually sank into a condition of selfish apathy." Patronage of literature had declined. A kind of "common sense" mastered Church and State: Christianity had been "silently converted into a mere system of elevated morality," and in politics every man had his price. Must those be stamped

as merely antiquated bigots who in an age freer than most from ideals and illusions could not quite blame the stormier enthusiasms and passions and livelier hopes of their predecessors, but felt that something was lost under the early Hanoverians? There must have been many, and especially at Oxford, who did sincerely and not altogether unreasonably look back to the years of passionate loyalties and devotions,—the years when men could still die with "vain faith, and courage vain," for a cause that history was to call impossible. Only very good Whigs could believe that the Elector of Hanover had brought over the millennium. Justifiably or not, Oxford had no love for the two first Georges. Time alone could cure the trouble: it was the growing personal popularity of the dynasty which eventually converted the country, and thereby (perhaps, as usual, a little more slowly) the University. By the time of George III.'s accession Oxford was ready enough to find an excuse for loyalty: and the end of the long Whig domination in politics made loyalty easy and consistent.

For Whig and Tory alike the note of this particular period is prejudice embittered by political opposition. To the Oxford Tory, taking his stand on "High Church principles," everything was anathema which savoured of Puritanism, — even when the dangerous movement in the direction of practical morality was (as one might suppose)

compensated for by its concurrent insistence on ritual observance. To the Oxford Whig everything was suspect which tended to disturb the *status quo* —the "recent happy settlement" in Church and State. Apart from the fact that the reign of George II. was not a period that especially favoured works of supererogation,—doers of such being liable to the damning imputation of "Enthusiasm,"—the political animosities of the early Georgian era are not remotely related to the religious intolerance which encountered the first beginnings of Methodism at Oxford. It would be tempting to endeavour to find a similarity between the Oxford Movements of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: and this much may at least be said, that they both originate in periods of varying degrees of academic torpor, and both precede an epoch of changed manners and ideas. But with this very slight and superficial resemblance the parallel ends. An ecclesiastical revival, based on a new or restored conception of the Church, appealing to the historic sense and the speculative intellect, has nothing in common with such a movement as that which was organised by John and Charles Wesley in 1729—a movement purely pietistic, aiming at the reformation of the individual by a stricter code of religious observance: in its essence, as Mr. Brodrick describes it, "not devotional but practical, not the propagation of a new creed, but the moral salvation of human souls." It was a protest partly against the loose living which

had been so prevalent in the years succeeding the Restoration, and which had been only in part reformed by the sporadically resolute government of the early years of the succeeding century: and partly against the spirit which masked Rationalism or Deism or sheer indifference under a brave show of fidelity to High Church principles. Such were the tendencies against which the earliest Methodists, disciples first of the Wesleys and later of George Whitefield, had to contend. The means they employed were what most ages would have called purely beneficent: never, one might have supposed, did any revival lay itself so little open to adverse criticism. There was no vulgarity, no sensational appeal to the emotions of large and excitable audiences—in Oxford, at any rate. All that the Methodists did was to encourage each other to virtuous living and good works. They were diligent in religious observance: they fasted, with the over-asceticism of a new enthusiasm: they started schools for the poor, they relieved the sick, they visited prisoners in gaol. And from first to last, during the six years intervening between John Wesley's return to Oxford and the subsequent mission to Georgia in 1735, they were consistently and uninterruptedly derided, abused, even punished. Oxford of that day was stony ground indeed: never had prophets less honour in their own country. The mass of undergraduate opinion would have none of Methodism. This is perhaps not so remarkable:



JOHN WESLEY

FROM AN ENGRAVING BY J. FABER AFTER THE PAINTING BY J. WILLIAMS

obvious differences in manner of life, unsociability, and want of care about such outward matters as dress, are always unpopular: and the revivalists were eccentric on principle. Whitefield, servitor at Pembroke and ex-drawer at his father's inn, says of himself, "I fasted twice a week. My apparel was mean. I thought it unbecoming a penitent to have his hair powdered. I wore woollen gloves, a patched gown, and dirty shoes." These are serious matters in the eyes of academic youth: yet with all allowances made, it is, as Canon Overton writes, "difficult to conceive" how it should have been possible for Whitefield to write of having seen the young men called Methodists go through a ridiculing crowd to receive the Holy Eucharist at St. Mary's. Nor was this all. Perhaps we should not judge a learned University by its foolish youth. But the attitude of the authorities towards a wholly blameless and virtuous movement is really not explainable: it seems to justify all the hard things that have been said of the century. "The seniors of Christ Church," writes Mr. Brodrick, "held a meeting to consider what could be done against them" (the Methodists). At Lincoln College, the Rector and Fellows showed determined hostility to them: the Master of Pembroke threatened to expel Whitefield "unless he gave up visiting": Whitefield's tutor at Pembroke, indeed, was charitable enough to condone his pupil's failings on the supposition that he was mad. The charity of grown men and

instructors of youth could no farther go. But in the eyes of academic zealots for High Church principles, Whitefield and the Wesleys—founding no heresy, subverting no system, only doing good—were actually dangerous: probably it was the fear of Puritanism, the old enemy: probably also it was the dislike, innate in that century, of everything excessive and unconventional. "It is the object of a good gendarmerie," says a character in About's *Homme à l'Oreille Cassée*, "to see that nothing unusual happens in the locality." The ideals of Heads of Colleges in 1730 were often those of the French gendarme. Their prejudice was based on disciplinary grounds: and as to liberality of feeling, they were of their age. It will be remembered that only sixteen years had elapsed since the Schism Act, designed to deprive Dissenters of their own schools, was supported by the father of John and Charles Wesley. Some Churchmen, at any rate, took more charitable views of the activity of Wesley's disciples: Whitefield records the warm approval which they received from an Oxford parish clergyman: "God bless you," he said: "I wish we had more such young curates." But this was not the temper of undergraduate Oxford, nor of its pastors and masters, who between them practically laughed and bullied Methodism out of existence within their realm. The hostility of Oxford to the Wesleyan movement in its fully-developed activity is easy enough to understand. It is less easy at first sight

to account for the intolerance of 1730: yet it was not out of keeping with the narrow formalism and party bitterness of that rather inexcusable period.

When John Wesley returned from Georgia, he found hardly a congregation to preach to, and his adherents, never numerous, had dwindled to the merest handful. But, in the country in general, Methodism grew and developed, gradually taking shape as a movement not within but outside the Anglican Church: the cleavage between it and orthodox Anglicanism grew wider: and nowhere, naturally, was the breach more definite than at Oxford, that home of sound High Church doctrine. Thus, forty years later, the very small Dissenting minority which ventured within the sacred precincts met with very rough handling. Dissent by this time was "the enemy": "the folly of Methodism," wrote a high academic official, "leads either to madness or infidelity." In 1768 the Vice-Chancellor, Durell, was invited by a tutor of St. Edmund Hall to hold a "Visitation" for the purpose of pronouncing judgment on six students of that society accused of Methodism and certain concomitant vices: they had preached in conventicles: they held dangerous views on Justification by Faith: several of them were low-born persons, quite out of their element in the University of Oxford. In three cases the charge of illiteracy and inability to perform the exercises of the Hall was thrown in as a makeweight: but as all,

illiterate and otherwise, were formally expelled, it is clear that the real gravamen was a religious or a social offence rather than an intellectual failing. This is made pretty clear by the notes taken during the trial by Dr. Nowell, the Public Orator and Principal of St. Mary's Hall. For instance, it is noted of James Matthews: "Accused that he was brought up to the trade of a weaver—that he had kept a taphouse—confessed.—Accused that he is totally ignorant of the Greek and Latin languages: which appeared by his declining all examination.—Said that he had been under the tuition of two clergymen for five years, viz. Mr. Davies and Newton: though it did not appear that he had during that time made any proficiency in learning—was about thirty years old—accused of being a reputed Methodist by the evidence of Mr. Atkins, formerly of Queen's College—that he was assistant to Mr. Davies a reputed Methodist, that he was instructed by Mr. Fletcher a reputed Methodist,—that he maintained the necessity of the sensible impulse of the Holy Spirit—that he entered himself of Edmund-Hall, with a design to get into holy Orders, for which he had offered himself a candidate, though he still continues to be wholly illiterate, and incapable of doing the exercises of the Hall—proved.—That he had frequented illicit conventicles held in a private house in Oxford—confessed. He produced two testimonials, one vouched by the Bishop of Litch-

field and Coventry, the other by the Bishop of Worcester." It is noted of Thomas Jones that he was "Accused that he had been brought up to the trade of a barber, which he had followed very lately—confessed.—Had made a very small proficiency in the Greek and Latin languages—was two years studying, and still incapable of performing the statutable exercises of the Hall—that he had been at the meetings at Mr. Durbridge's—that he had expounded the Scriptures to a mixed congregation at Wheaton Aston, though not in holy Orders, and prayed extempore. All this he confessed. He urged in his defence that he had asked his Tutor whether he thought it wrong for him to pray or instruct in a private family, and that his Tutor answered, he did not, which he said was the reason of his continuing to do it." The sentence pronounced on one of the victims may serve as a sample: *ex uno disce omnes.* "It having also appeared to me that Benjamin Kay of the said Hall, by his own confession, had frequented illicit conventicles in a private house in this town: where he had heard extempore prayers frequently offered up by one Hewett, a stay-maker. Moreover, it having been proved by sufficient evidence that he held methodistical principles: viz. the doctrine of absolute election: that the Spirit of God works irresistibly: that once a child of God always a child of God: that he had endeavoured to instil the same principles into others, and exhorted

them to continue stedfastly in them against all opposition.—Therefore, I, D. Durell, by virtue of my visitatorial power, and with the advice and opinion of each and every one of my assessors, the reverend persons before mentioned, do expel the said Benjamin Kay from the said Hall, and hereby pronounce him also expelled."

It was not to be expected that severe measures like this would pass without comment. The whole matter was argued at great length. Dr. T. Nowell defends the action of the University authorities on the ground that the six unfortunates had "attended illicit conventicles prohibited by the Statutes of the University." "Let me then again repeat," he says, "what I have before declared, that the legal or statutable cause of their expulsion was their having ATTENDED ILLICIT CONVENTICLES, PROHIBITED BY THE STATUTES OF THE UNIVERSITY. Most of them had indeed aggravated this crime, by assuming to themselves the character of preachers in such illicit conventicles, and one of them had even dared to officiate as a clergyman in a parish church." No doubt a University has a technical right to punish disobedience to the letter of its Statutes: even by expulsion, usually regarded as the penalty of very gross offences. The Public Orator is more questionable when he goes on to say that "a farther aggravation of their crime was that they were most of them illiterate mechanics, who had intruded themselves into the University, for which

they were neither designed nor qualified: and what still added to the propriety and expediency of putting the statute in force against them was their notorious connexion with the methodists, both in principles and practice: and in this view their tenets were considered, together with the very indecent manner in which they broached them before their tutor: who had reason to complain of them as Archbishop Whitgift did, 'of those new-fangled and factious sectaries, whose endeavour is to make divisions wherever they come.'" These are arguments which hardly appeal to the sympathies of posterity: and in any case, if low birth or sordid occupation or "connexion with the Methodists" might prevent a candidate from gaining admission to an academic foundation, it is hardly just that he should be expelled for such reasons when he is there. The author of *Pietas Oxoniensis* (Sir R. Hill) has no difficulty in showing the absurdity of expelling for a belief in Justification by Faith, while gross vices are ignored or condoned. Such attacks or apologies could not fail to kindle the fires of theological controversy: and both sides are copious. Ponderous pamphleteers interpret the Articles of the Church, and the imposing authority of Laud, Hammond, Bull, and Tillotson is matched against the august names of Hooker, Whitgift, Hutton, and Jewel. *Non nostrum est tantas componere lites.* What is sufficiently clear is that the academic authorities of 1768 were animated by

a narrow, exclusive and persecuting temper ("though Bonner and Gardiner are no more," says the author of *Pietas Oxoniensis*, "yet their spirit and disposition are certainly risen from the dead"), and that social as well as religious intolerance was rampant.

"Rejoice, ye sons of Papal Rome,"

says the *London Chronicle*,—

"No longer hide the head,
Mary's blest days are come again,
And Bonner from the dead.
. . . . . .
"So drink, ye jovial souls, and swear,
And all shall then go well:
But O take heed of Hymns and Prayer,
These cry aloud—EXPEL."

The Printer of the *London Chronicle* is requested to "insert the following lines in his most useful and candid paper": "On some Expulsions from E—H—, O——d, of certain Gentlemen for holding the doctrines of Election, Perseverance, Justification by Faith alone, man's natural impotency to good, and the efficacious influence of the Spirit:

"Where Cranmer died, where Ridley bled,
Martyrs for truth sincere,
See Cranmer's faith, and Ridley's hope,
Thrust out and martyr'd here!"

The *Public Advertiser* prints the following "Dialogue between a Doctor and a Proctor":

"DOCTOR

All hail, my good Friend! we have carried the day,
And, by fair means or foul, have sent them away.

PROCTOR

This prating of Faith and Regeneration
Is spreading its Poison all over the Nation.

DOCTOR

I ne'er knew the like since I've been a Doctor.

PROCTOR

Indeed, Sir, nor I, since I've been a Proctor.

DOCTOR

Bear Witness, my Friend, what pains I have taken:
I've preach'd, foam'd, and stamp'd till the Pulpit has shaken.

PROCTOR

Towards all of this Way no mercy I show,
For I fear'd all along whereunto it would grow.

DOCTOR

For Virtue and Works what a Hero I've been,
As well by my Writing as Preaching is seen.

PROCTOR

Come, come, my good Friend, there is nobody by,
Let us own the plain Truth between you and I:
We talk and we preach of good Works, it is true:
We talk and we preach, but leave others to do:
Against true Gospel Zeal it is that we fight,
For we must be wrong if these young Men are right."

Whatever the Wesleys may have done towards reformation of morals, they certainly had not broadened the sympathies of Oxford Heads of Houses: even though the Principal of the Hall himself pleaded, against his Tutor, for the acquittal and retention of the students. Authority had indeed the approval of Dr. Johnson. "They" (the students) "were examined," said the lexicographer,

"and found to be mighty ignorant fellows." "But," said Boswell, "was it not hard to expel them? for I am told they were good beings." "I believe," replied Johnson, "that they might be good beings, but they were not fit to be in the University of Oxford. A cow is a very good animal in the field, but we turn her out of a garden." The Doctor's defence of the Heads does not hold water. They themselves make Methodism, and not ignorance, the primary ground for expulsion. Time did nothing to alleviate prejudice: and in 1779, when a bill was proposed for the further relief of Protestant Dissenting ministers and schoolmasters, it was resisted by a formal protest from the Chancellor, Masters, and Scholars of the University.

Perhaps the contumelious treatment of Wesley's followers in 1730 may be partly explained as an act of ill-tempered retaliation. Oxford had suffered at the hands of the Whigs,—at least, had received few benefits from them,—and to maltreat whatever savoured of Puritanism was at once agreeable to the temper of the time and an act of hostility to the party which was inclined to show some toleration of Dissenters. But the Dons who expelled Methodists in 1768 had no such shadow of justification. They did it, as we have seen, quite as much out of mere gentility and respectability as religious prejudice (for the Oxford of that day was nothing if not respectable: the University had become a select seminary for young gentlemen, soliciting as

such the patronage of Government): there was no political animus to justify the act. Forty years' wandering in the wilderness of opposition had brought the "Jacobite capital" at last to the promised land of reconciliation with the powers that be: the Encænia of 1763, which celebrated the conclusion of peace after the Seven Years' War, celebrated also the treaty of peace between Oxford and the House of Hanover. In April of that year the loyal address of Convocation to George III. received a very cordial answer: "It is highly acceptable to me," says His Majesty, "to receive your warm congratulations on the re-establishment of the Publick Tranquillity: an event so interesting to humanity, so peculiarly connected to the advancement of Religion and the improvement of Letters. Your zealous and unwearied attention to these great and important objects of your care and duty, justly entitle you to my continuance and constant protection." Evidently we have travelled a long way from the days when the Universities were homes of disloyalty and "cages of unclean birds"! But now a Tory administration was at last in power: and even the aged Principal of St. Mary Hall, the secretary of Ormond and Arran, the very central figure of Oxford Toryism for forty years, the deliverer of the celebrated Jacobite "Redeat" address,—even Dr. King himself could without theoretical inconsistency appear at the Encænia as the eulogist of Government, and "in a most

spirited and elegant oration . . . enlarge on the salutary effects arising from a general peace." Thus the hatchet was buried: as *Terræ Filius* said in the same year, the Tories were all at Court and Oxonians were made bishops. Twenty-two years later, "Their Majesties and the Royal Offspring" visited Oxford from Nuneham, spending a few hours of a September day in the town and seeing the sights. They held a kind of extemporised levee in the Theatre, where Dr. Hayes played the organ while the Vice-Chancellor and Proctors and Heads of Houses "kissed hands." All was loyalty and propriety of demeanour. "We have the Happiness to find," says the *Oxford Journal*, "that the Decency of the Populace, and great Attention of all other classes of the Inhabitants, were highly pleasing." In August of the next year the visit was repeated: Miss Burney, who was of the party as a maid of honour, gives a lively description of the day—how the maids of honour were entertained with surreptitious refreshments in Christ Church Hall, and how Dons "kissed hands" in the Theatre with more loyalty than grace. Anyhow, there was loyalty in plenty. Oxford had entered upon that period of "dull uninterrupted sycophancy" which, according to Mr. J. R. Green, was even worse than the Jacobitism which he cannot condemn too strongly. Indeed, an Oxford Tory fares hardly at the hands of Liberal historians. He is a

CARFAX

FROM AN ENGRAVING BY J. SKELTON AFTER THE DRAWING BY J. DONOWELL

fool when he rebels, and a sycophant when he submits.

These not very important events mark the beginning of one of the peacefullest and not the least useful stages of academic history. During the first few decades of the nineteenth century, Oxford, if not yet much troubled by questionings about the proper relation of Universities to the Nation, was at least doing its best to be "eminently respectable" and to achieve some useful internal reforms: representing, worthily enough, the educational ideals of the upper classes whom alone it educated: and, as its special business, making the legend of the "Hero as undergraduate," the champion of the Schools and the River, who has been consecrated by literature and will probably survive as the typical Oxford Man of the nineteenth century. But later years brought all the new social and intellectual problems of modern Oxford, for which we have been variously helped or handicapped by the tradition of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The former established College government on a firm basis of good order, the latter invented the means of giving average men an object to work for: so far, so good: but the years of internal reform had also turned the University into a close corporation, a preserve for only one section of English society. With the assimilation in tastes and habits of the "upper" and "upper middle" classes, the two between them

had appropriated Oxford: and while the added picturesqueness of College life and its closer fraternity and *esprit de corps* were no doubt good things in themselves, yet the result has been that in the long nineteenth century battle between privilege and democracy, Oxford has sometimes been on the wrong—that is, the losing—side. Until Colleges change themselves and their relation to the University, indeed until the conditions of English society are radically altered, it does not yet appear how Oxford is going to be "truly national." As long as there are class distinctions in England, so long will Universities fail to satisfy now one and now another section of public opinion. This, at least, is to their credit,—that they fail to satisfy themselves.

APPENDIX

HEADS OF COLLEGES AND HALLS DURING THE CENTURY

[*The numerals indicate the date of election.*
V.-C. = *Vice-Chancellor*]

Masters of University: Arthur Charlett, 1692, a capable and energetic master, but overbearing and quarrelsome. Thomas Cockman, 1722 (elected and ultimately confirmed by the Crown after much controversy), a good scholar, said to have been "revered as a father and loved as a brother" in his College. John Browne, 1745, V.-C. 1750–53: Archdeacon of Northampton. Nathan Wetherell, 1764, V.-C. 1768–72, "a befitting Master for the now flourishing society": Dean of Hereford, 1800.

Masters of Balliol: Roger Mander, 1687. John Baron, 1704, V.-C. 1715–18, "a stalwart Whig." Joseph Hunt, 1721. Theophilus Leigh, 1726, V.-C. 1738–41, a strong Tory. John Davey, 1785. John Parsons, 1798, V.-C. 1807–10, a Tory in politics, but "in academic matters a consistent Liberal": one of the framers of the New Examination Statute; Bishop of Peterborough, 1813.

Wardens of Merton: Richard Lydall, 1693. Edmund Martin, 1704. John Holland, 1709, a strong Whig. Robert Wyntle, 1734. John Robinson, 1750. Henry Barton, 1759. Scrope Berdmore, 1790, V.-C. 1796–97.

Rectors of Exeter: William Paynter, 1690, V.-C. 1698–1700. Matthew Hole, 1716. John Conybeare, 1730, "a strenuous reformer" in Exeter. Joseph Attwell, 1733, a scholar and man of science: F.R.S. James Edgcumbe, 1737. Francis Webber, 1750: Dean of Hereford, 1756. Thomas Bray, 1771. Thomas Stinton, 1785. Henry Richards, 1797, V.-C. 1806–7.

Provosts of Oriel: George Royse, 1691, "reckoned a good florid preacher": Dean of Bristol, 1694. George Carter, 1708, "a worthy, ingenious, sober gentleman, and a good scholar." Walter Hodges, 1729, V.-C. 1741-44, "a good scholar." Chardin Musgrave, 1757. John Clarke, 1768. John Eveleigh, 1781: the chief author of the New Examination statute.

Provosts of Queen's: Timothy Halton, 1677. William Lancaster, 1704, V.-C. 1706–10, "adorned with every grace" (Tickell); "That old Knave" (Hearne). John Gibson, 1717. Joseph Smith, 1730. Joseph Browne, 1756, V.-C. 1759–65. Thomas Fothergill, 1767, V.-C. 1772–76. Septimus Collinson, 1796.

Wardens of New College: Richard Traffles, 1701. Thomas Braithwaite, 1703, V.-C. 1710–12. John Cobb, 1712. John Dobson, 1720. Henry Bigg, 1725. John Coxed, 1730. John Purnell, 1740, V.-C. 1750–53. Thomas Hayward, 1764. John Oglander, 1768. Samuel Gauntlett, 1794.

Rectors of Lincoln: Fitzherbert Adams, 1685, V.-C. 1695–97. John Morley, 1719. Euseby Isham, 1731, V.-C. 1744, Richard Hutchins, 1755, "two excellent Rectors." Charles Mortimer, 1781. John Horner, 1784. Edward Tatham, 1792, "a shrewd and vigorous man," but unduly combative.

Wardens of All Souls': Hon. Leopold William Finch, 1687. Bernard Gardiner, 1702, V.-C. 1712–15, "hardworking and conscientious," but tactless and quarrelsome. Stephen Niblett, 1726, V.-C. 1735–38. Hon. John Tracy, 1766. Edmund Isham, 1793, V.-C. 1797–98.

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